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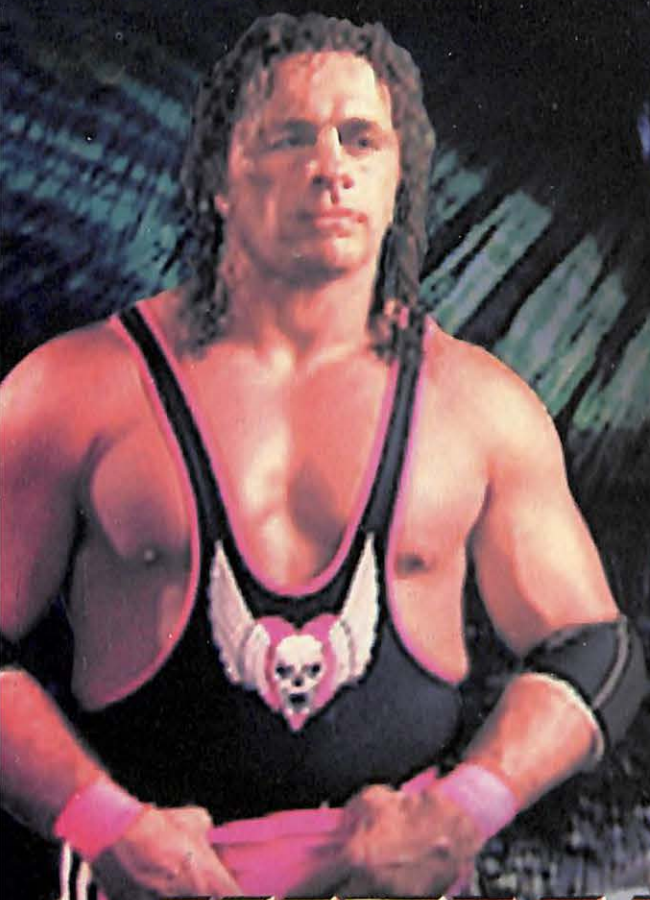
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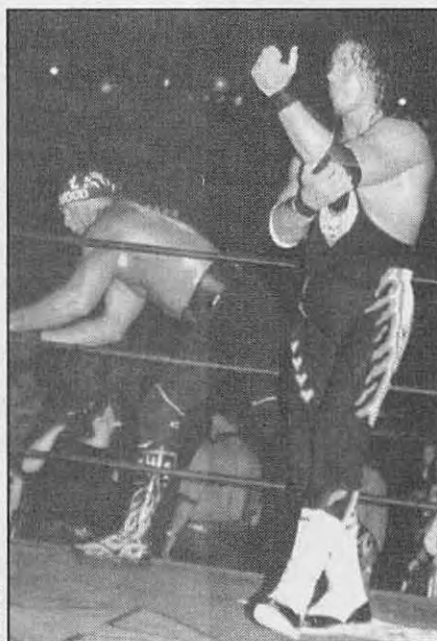
W Inside Wrestling

THE MAGAZINE
THAT RIPS THE LID
OFF PRO WRESTLING

FEBRUARY 1999

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January 19, 1999

Sincerely Yours

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TWO WORDS

Congratulations to my favorite wrestler, Ken Shamrock, on winning the WWF Intercontinental title. Way to go, Ken.

I do have one question, however. Why did the WWF fans turn against him just when he won the title? Is it because big-nose Hunter got stripped of the belt? The man looks like an anteater. To all you DeGeneration X fans out there, I got two words for ya: Ha! Ha!

REBECCA STAAS
Phoenix, AZ

MORE ON BENOIT

My family and I watch wrestling every chance we get. My sons like Steve Austin in the WWF and Bill Goldberg in WCW. These men are



The expression on Chris Benoit's face says it all. "The Canadian Crippler" always gives everything he has. Penny Bareet says Benoit should be rewarded with more coverage in our magazines.

both great athletes. However, when I think of pure wrestling, only one current wrestler comes to mind: Chris Benoit.

Benoit doesn't come dancing into the ring carrying signs or crying about injustices. He just comes out and wrestles. He doesn't bring a chair or a bat. He just brings himself. That's why I enjoy watching his matches so much. I especially loved his matches against Booker T.

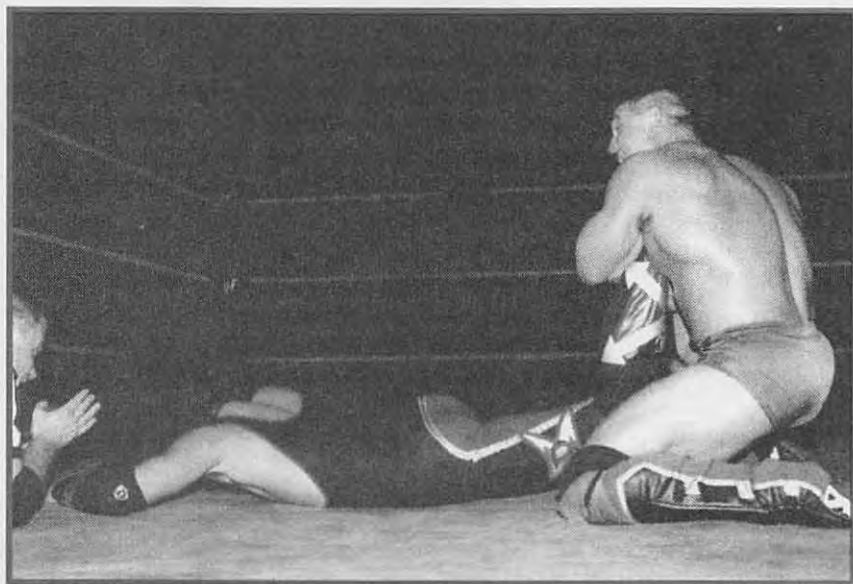
My boys get all of your magazines, but I remain disappointed month after month. I would love to see Chris on the cover or maybe read an interview with him. I think many of your readers would also like to see more of Chris Benoit in your magazines. The man is a fine wrestler, so let's give him the credit he deserves.

PENNY BAREET
Ellabelle, GA

CHYNOPHILE II

I am writing to let Kurtis C. Wolfe know that he is not the only wrestling fan who appreciates Chyna's beauty ("Chynophile," December 1998).

To many people, the sight of a musclebound female is an instant



Ken Shamrock became the new WWF I-C champ after his win over X-Pac in a tournament final. Reader Rebecca Staas seems to relish the fact that Shamrock prospered at the expense of both X-Pac and "Triple-H."

turnoff, but I think Chyna can stand proudly next to Sable, Jackie, or any other woman in wrestling. Wolfe is right: Chyna's eyes are gorgeous, and her high cheekbones show them off wonderfully.

Unfortunately, Chyna will probably be remembered as a thug—not a beautiful and talented woman—because of her membership in DeGeneration X. Let her wrestle in the new women's division or against the men. Chyna is too special to be kept under wraps as some sort of sidekick.

BERT SALLEY
Leighton, PA



Here's one that got away. Steve Austin fared much better in the WWF after leaving Eric Bischoff and WCW behind. Reader Steven L. English lambastes Bischoff for letting wrestlers like Austin get away.

YOU BLEW IT

Whatever happened to the way wrestling used to be? Eric Bischoff ruined WCW. At one time, the NWA was one of the best—if not the best—wrestling organization around. But WCW sure isn't. That's because Eric Bischoff has no vision. He cannot create his own superstars. He has to buy them from the WWF.

That's right, Eric, you got rid of Marc Mero and Steve Austin, but look at them now. Vince McMahon has turned these two guys into stars.

Maybe if you had the same foresight as McMahon, WCW would be worth watching again. Until it is, I hope that the WWF runs you out of the business.

STEVEN L. ENGLISH
Jacksonville, FL

TRUE INSPIRATION

I think it's time that **INSIDE WRESTLING** blows the horn for ECW's most underrated giant killer: Spike Dudley. In a matter of minutes, Spike has done what legions of wrestlers have failed to do over the course of several years. He beat One Man Gang, 911, Sal E. Graziano, and Buh Buh Ray Dudley with ease, and he has become one of ECW's most

beloved athletes.

Spike should be counted among the elite for his achievements. He is the most inspirational competitor in the world.

RANDY CURRY
Queens, NY

*[Editor's note: Spike Dudley, the 155-pound giant-killer, is featured in the current edition of our sister publication **The Wrestler**.]*

FAMILY A-FLAIR

The restraining orders can't last forever. And Eric Bischoff better watch his step! If 10-year-old Reid Flair can take him down twice in one night, then just imagine what Ric could do. What can the Horsemen do? They can run Eric and the NWO black and white out of every Horsemen town in the U.S.A. And if I know wrestling, almost every town is Horsemen territory.

Ride 'em, Ric, ride 'em, Reid, ride 'em, David, ride 'em, Beth. Yep, even Ric's wife, Beth, got in on the action. I have seen the future of WCW, and it's a family a-Flair.

PATTIE LaRUE
Searcy, AR
(Continued on page 52)

Inside Wrestling

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REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By Stu Saks

There never was the threat of physical violence, but there was enough shouting at the National Wrestling Alliance Convention in October to bring a smile to Bill Apter's face.

"When I was invited to sit in on the NWA members meeting, I didn't know what to expect," said INSIDE WRESTLING's senior editor. "I really didn't know how serious these people were about making the NWA viable again. But when I saw all the raw emotion being displayed by the promoters, it made me think of the conventions of the promoters of the old NWA. And that was refreshing."

The old NWA to which Apter was referring was the coalition of regional promotions that formed the National Wrestling Alliance, whose first world champion was crowned in 1948. In fact, the meeting of NWA promoters and directors at the Hilton Hotel in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, was just part of the NWA 50th Anniversary weekend that also included a traders show, a luncheon sponsored by the Cauliflower Alley Club, and a wrestling card that included a title defense by NWA champion Dan Severn. For nearly 35 years, the NWA was the dominant promotion in the sport, but that began to change when Vince McMahon bought his father's promotion and began his bid to take over the world. He didn't completely succeed, of course, but by the late-'80s, the NWA name had become virtually meaningless.

Still, there were some who thought there was still magic in those letters, and the NWA, never officially dead, began to re-invent itself over the last few years. By the time the convention was held, there were 22 member promotions (some more active than others) in the Alliance. The ultimate goal, according to NWA Vice President Bill Behrens, is to once again make the NWA a national force by unifying as many independent promotions in as many parts of the country—and the world—as possible.

In order to achieve this goal, Behrens says that the NWA has to establish its competitors on a national basis. As we were going to press, plans were being finalized to change Behrens' Music City Wrestling TV show, which he says reaches a potential audience of 40 million people through syndication, to an NWA wrestling show. Tapes would be sent to Behrens from NWA members highlighting their stars and, depending on the locale of the TV taping, NWA stars could be brought in. Down the road, Behrens said, maybe a year or more, there is hope of getting into the pay-per-view market.

"If they don't make it," Apter said, "it won't be because of apathy. These men, Behrens, [President Howard] Brody, they are dead serious, and they're taking the lead. If anybody there wasn't committed, they're either committed now or, I'll tell you what, they won't be at the next convention."

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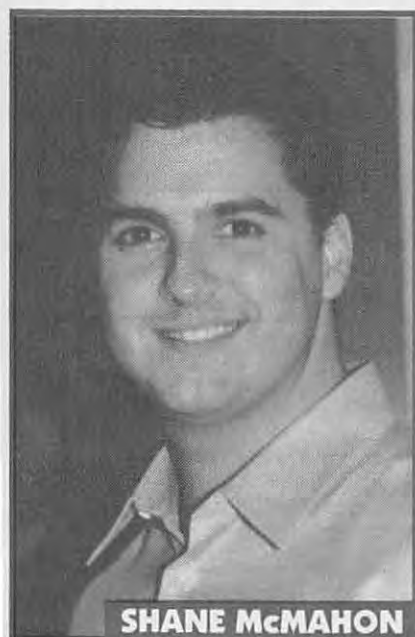
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NAMES MA

SHANE McMAHON AND **Steve Austin** have been close friends since *WrestleMania XIV*, but Shane's father, WWF owner **Vince McMahon**, had no inkling.

"I knew it, but I didn't want to get involved," WWF ring announcer **Howard Finkel** told me. "I ran into Shane and Austin a few days before the event in an out-of-the-way private club that a friend took me to in a suburb of Boston. When Shane saw me, he whisked me into the bathroom and made me promise not to tell his father. He said his dad despised Steve and everything he stands for. He was really nervous. He said there'd be big trouble if his dad knew he was Austin's friend."

"I promised him I wouldn't say anything, but now that Shane has told the world on TV, I can tell everybody what I witnessed. I'm really shocked Shane has slapped his father in the face like this."



SHANE McMAHON

"**Diamond**" **Dallas Page** wrestled for the two most important titles in WCW on consecutive nights in late-October and came out the winner in one. At *Halloween Havoc*, Page lost a very competitive match to World champion **Bill Goldberg**. The following night, Page came back to defeat **Bret Hart** for the U.S. title.



DALLAS PAGE

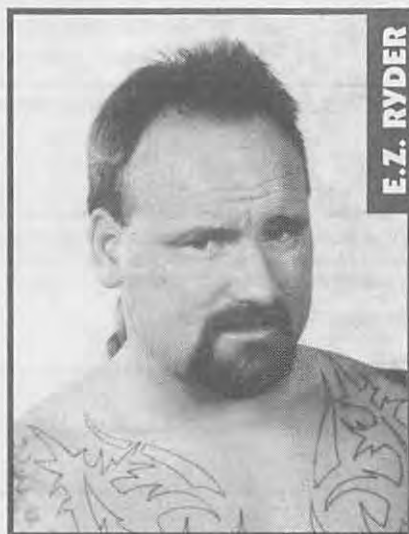
"You know, very few people pay compliments to the WCW Executive Committee, and the head of that group, **J.J. Dillon**," Page said. "I want to go on record to thank them for two opportunities of a lifetime and also go on record to say I will make WCW proud of its U.S. champion!"

By the way, Dillon let us in on this inside scoop: "The Executive Committee had already decided that the loser of the World title match at *Havoc* would be the challenger for the United States title the next night," he said. "U.S. champion **Bret Hart**, **Sting**, who challenged Hart at *Havoc*, and

both **Goldberg** and **Page** were made aware of that fact one week before the pay-per-view. All four men are excellent competitors, regardless of their affiliation, and they all were deserving of championship matches."

News out of the NWA 50th Anniversary weekend: **Howard Brody** was re-elected as president of the NWA, while MCW's **Bill Behrens** was elected vice president. There were also several title changes on the 50th anniversary card: **Doug Gilbert** regained the National belt from **Stevie Richards** by pinning him in a tag team match; **Erich Sbraccia** and **Knuckles Nelson** won the NWA tag team belts in a four-team match, beating **The Border Patrol**, **Team Extreme**, and **Tom Prichard** and **Tully Blanchard**; **Ace Darling** and **Storm** (formerly **Devon Storm**) defeated **The Misfits** to win the NWA 2000 tag belts; and **E.Z. Ryder** defeated **Paul Atlas** for the NWA Canada title.

Debra McMichael, who now manages **Jeff Jarrett** in the WWF,



E.Z. RYDER

KIN' NEWS

By Bill Apter

tells me that she has her eyes on a WWF superstar whom she plans to team with Jarrett. She would give no clues other than to say, "**The New Age Outlaws** know this man, and when he and Jeff get together, the belts are as good as ours."

Horace Hogan says that his uncle **Hollywood** opened the door for him to join **NWO Hollywood** when he feared Horace would form an alliance with **The Warrior**. "I never would slap my uncle in the face, even though he attacked me," Horace said. "**The Disciple** confided in me and told me that my uncle thought I'd seek shelter from **NWO Hollywood** with **The Warrior**. But I want everyone to know that even if my uncle broke both my legs and arms, I'd never join up with **The Warrior**. I hated **The Warrior** when he beat my uncle, and that hatred will always be there."

Big Bossman couldn't be happier with his job of protecting Mr. McMahon. "He always treated me with the utmost respect when I wrestled here before," Bossman said. "Whatever he wants done,

he's got it. If he wants me to break **Steve Austin** or anyone else in half, I'll gladly oblige" ... **Kevin Nash** and **Goldberg** teamed twice recently, but not in the ring. The duo appeared together in an episode of *The Love Boat* and on QVC (a shop-at-home network), where they hawked official WCW merchandise. More than 23,000 items were sold the night they were on the air.



CHRISTIAN CAGE

Christian Cage is one of the hottest young wrestlers in the world right now. He holds two heavyweight championships (Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling and East Coast Wrestling Association) and one light heavyweight championship (WWF), but he is far from satisfied. "Those three titles are truly prized possessions," Cage told me. "But next I want to add an NWA belt, perhaps the heavyweight title held by **Dan Severn**. The guy is no match for me. With my speed, he'd never catch up to me. He's gone in about four minutes."

Mr. Wrestling III and **Manny Villalobos** are feuding with **Kro**

2000 and **Ace** at ICW cards in San Antonio ... **ECW** will be seen in England on the Bravo Network soon ... *Pump*, a bodybuilding magazine, will feature a **Tammy Sytch** pictorial in an upcoming issue.

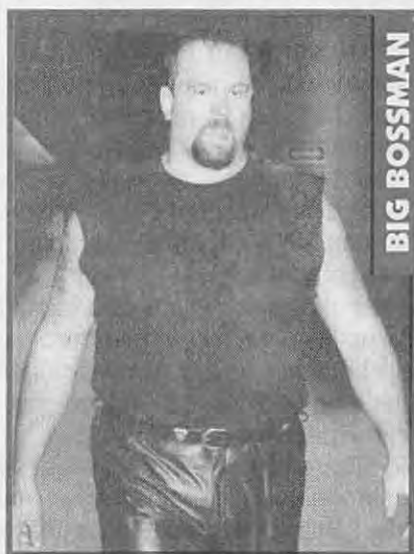


VERONICA VON IRONS

Pro Wrestling Xpress' **Veronica Von Irons**, a bodybuilder herself, has issued a challenge to **Chyna**. "She walks around like she owns the world," Von Irons says. "In strength and in beauty, both inner and outer, I am far superior. It's time she meets her ultimate challenge in life, and that is me!" Adds Irons' manager, **Gentleman Joe**: "Veronica will wrestle her for free just to prove her superiority."

Vito and **Guido Andretti** have beaten **Nick Dinsmore** and **Rob Conway** for the Ohio Valley Wrestling Southern tag team belts. With referee **Robert Brisco** distracted, Guido hit Dinsmore over the head with a wrench handed to him by manager **Kenny Bolin** and got the pin shortly thereafter.

That's all for now. I'll see you at the matches! □



BIG BOSSMAN

CHERRY HILL, NEW Jersey, is a hop, skip, and a jump away from the offices of **INSIDE WRESTLING**, so when I saw that Tully Blanchard was wrestling on an NWA card there, I figured it might be a great opportunity to finally get some straight answers. I was right. Blanchard, as usual, got right to the point. No nonsense. He had not signed with WCW. The rumors of him going there to jump in the middle of the whole Eric Bischoff-Four Horsemen feud were not true.

"I don't know how these rumors start," Blanchard said, although for the answer to that question, all he had to do was turn to former part-

ON THE ROAD

With Dave Lenker

had no contact with WCW. "None." Straight from Blanchard's mouth.

time tag team partner Barry Windham. It was Windham who had said a few weeks earlier that he and Blanchard were both interested in returning to WCW. "We're Horsemen for life," Windham said. "What's going on with Eric Bischoff and the current Horsemen is not acceptable to us."

Just to refresh some memories, Windham wasn't a Horseman for very long, so I don't know where he got the idea he's a Horseman for life. As for Blanchard's return, Tully insisted that there aren't even contract negotiations going on with WCW. He has

Still, you can't help but wonder. Ric Flair, Chris Benoit, Dean Malenko, and Steve McMichael are back together again in WCW, and not a *Nitro* or *Thunder* goes by when you don't hear the Horsemen mentioned in the present tense. Blanchard, however, says he isn't all that interested in what's going on in WCW.

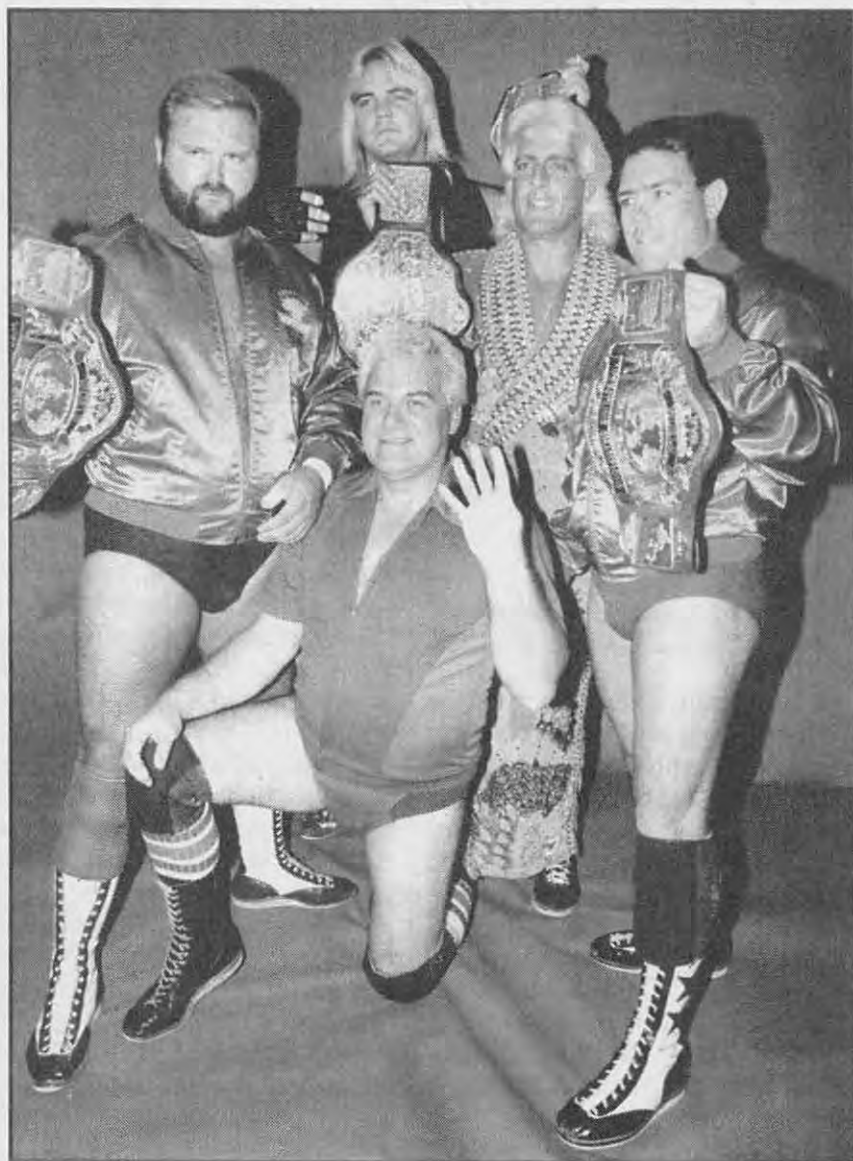
"That's living in the past," Blanchard said. "I'm living in the present and looking toward the future. In my opinion, The Four Horsemen are me, Arn Anderson, Ole Anderson, and Ric Flair, and anything else is a bad imitation. It's like saying you can have The Beatles without John Lennon. Sure, you can call them anything you want, but that's not what they are."

Besides, Blanchard has nothing to prove. He's a former WCW and WWF world tag team champion, something not many men can say. He's still a drawing card. He and Windham were recently NWA tag team champions, and the trio they formed with Magnum T.A., another former NWA superstar, attracted a lot of attention.

Another thing Blanchard is quick to point out: The Horsemen broke up because each member thought the time had come to put the group in the past.

"There are certain things that are appropriate for certain times of your life," Blanchard said. "The things

(Continued on page 54)



Tully Blanchard still has fond memories of the days when he was a proud member of The Four Horsemen. He loved those days. But he doesn't necessarily want to revisit them.

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Behind the Dressing Room Door

By Dave Rosenbaum

THE CRAZIEST THING about Vince McMahon's three stooges—Pat Patterson, Sgt. Slaughter, and Gerald Brisco—is that they really are stooges. I mean, Pat Patterson. What did Pat Patterson ever do during his active wrestling career other than finish second? I spent an hour the other day looking up and down at the WWF and WCW title lists, trying to find a single mention of Patterson's name—just in case my memory hadn't served me well—and could find only one. He was the first Intercontinental champion. That's it. Big deal.

Sgt. Slaughter. There's another guy. The only thing you need to know about Slaughter is that he has no moral fiber. Forever we were told that this guy was a former Marine drill sergeant, a man who loved the good ol' U.S. of A. He was a walking G.I. Joe, the most patriotic son of a gun you'd ever want to see, but then what happened when America went to war with Iraq? He turned tail. Joined the Iraqis—just to give his sagging career a boost. Then the war ended and Slaughter begged for our forgiveness.

That's my lasting impression of Sgt. Slaughter's career. Not of him winning the WWF World title in 1991, but of him getting down on his

knees and begging for Americans to forgive him. I don't know about you, but I still haven't.

Finally, Gerald Brisco, formerly known as Jerry Brisco, and your guess is as good as mine why Jerry used to be okay, but now it has to be Gerald. As Jerry, he teamed with his brother, Jack, to win the NWA World tag team title. As Gerald, he's a suit-wearing kissup. Besides, the Briscos were never anything compared to the Funks.

You know, while others who follow wrestling have stuck to the distinctions "fan favorite" and "rule-breaker," I've always preferred separating wrestlers into two more meaningful categories: those who will sell out, and those who won't sell out. Brisco, Patterson, and Slaughter have always fallen into the category of those who will sell out for a quarter.

More of those who will sell out: Hollywood Hogan, Sting, The Ultimate Warrior, Lex Luger, Rocky Maivia, and Bret Hart.

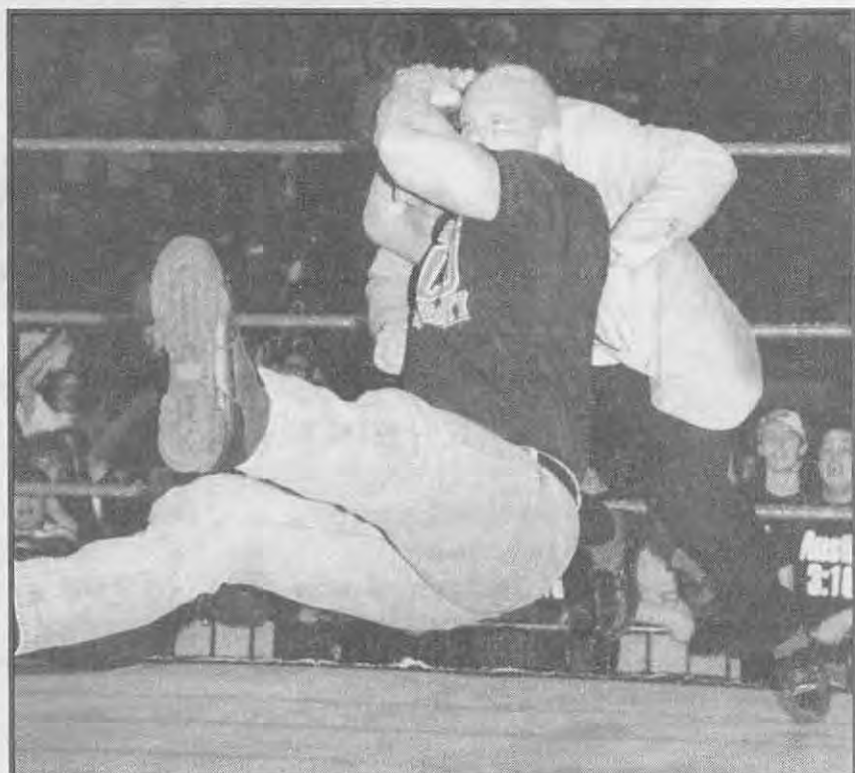
Those who won't: Bill Goldberg, Steve Austin ... well, the list is short.

Anyway, now you can probably understand why my favorite scene of 1998 was "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin delivering three consecutive "Stone-Cold stunners" to McMahon's stooges at a TV taping in October. One right after the other. If only McMahon was the fourth, it would have been perfect, but he got his share throughout the year.

So what have we learned from watching McMahon's stooges in action over the past half-year? Well, we've learned that you can dress up three stooges in suits, but they still look like three stooges in suits. Never has a man looked more out of place than Slaughter in anything resembling a suit.

Pat Patterson. Here's a guy who would be working as a rent-a-cop if McMahon hadn't put him on the dole. Gerald Brisco. I don't know what to say about Brisco, because I don't spend much time thinking about him.

(Continued on page 55)



Now this is a sight Dave Rosenbaum likes to see—Brisco (or any of the stooges) getting felled by a "Stone-Cold stunner." Actually, it's a sight wrestling fans around the country love to see.



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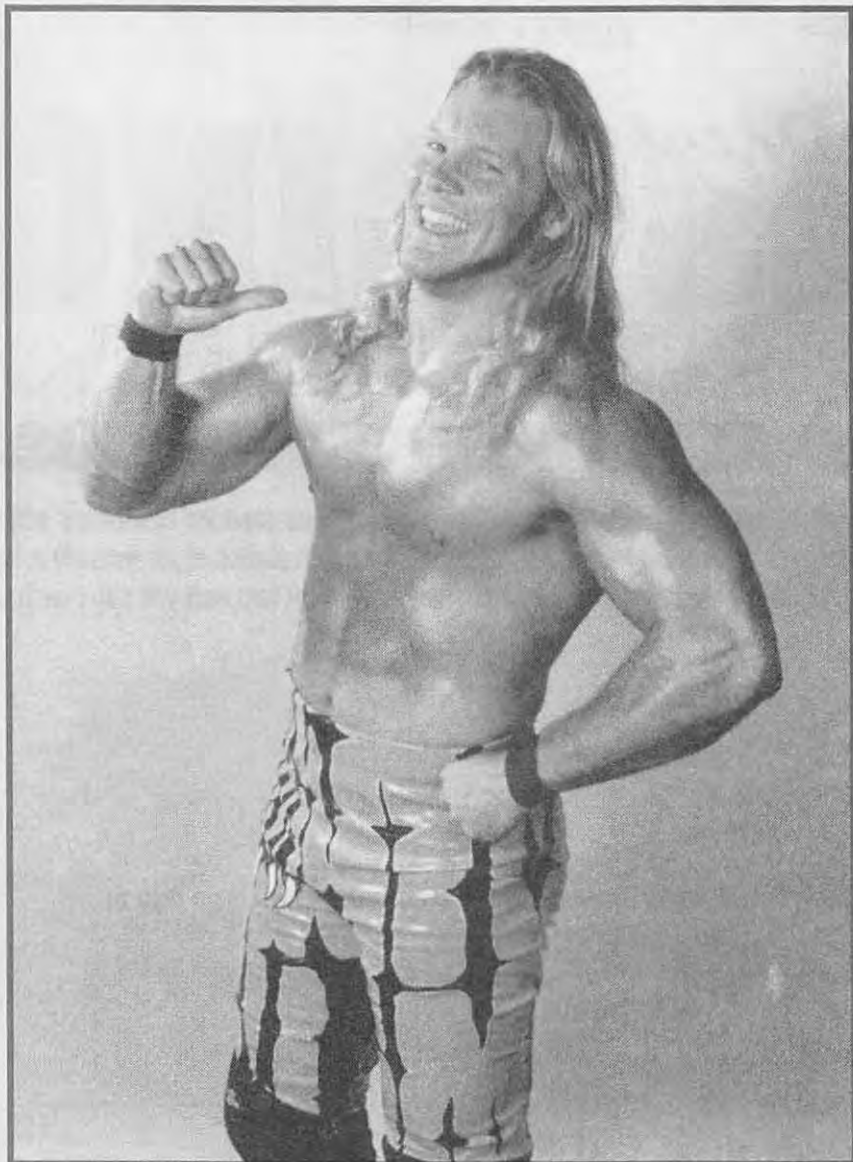
the Insider

by Brandi Mankiewicz

(The opinions expressed in "The Insider" are those of Brandi Mankiewicz alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.)

MY NAME IS Brandi ... and I am a "Jerichoholic."

That is not such a difficult thing to say. I suspect that most of the minions out there are "Jerichoholics" as well. Some



You have to love this man's attitude. Chris Jericho conducts himself like a true champion wherever he goes. And he will be WCW World champion in due time. Trust me—he will be.

might say Chris Jericho has a cult following, but that is just a polite way of saying it's a small group. Jerichomania is just starting to sweep the nation; thousands will soon be jumping on the bandwagon of the reigning WCW TV champion.

As much as I love watching Jericho, I didn't really relish the idea of traveling to Minnesota to do so. Outside of the fact that it is the home of our resident toon-maker/writer Steve Anderson, it is just plain cold, even in mid-October. But when you are a week away from Halloween Havoc, chances are you're going to see some newsworthy events unfold on *Nitro*, so I went.

One event worth mentioning on the night I was in Minneapolis' Target Center was that Warrior actually kept his mouth shut, although the fans reacted in kind when he charged out to the ring. I am not saying it was completely silent, but when he and Hollywood Hogan tussled, I was almost convinced that WCW had just sanctioned the first-ever library match, with the stipulation being that the crowd must be as quiet as possible. Does anyone still care about this painted-face yutz?

But I digress. The evening's festivities went as planned, but the talk of the night had to be Jericho. While many will point to "The Rock" as a man who recently emerged as a main-eventer, Jericho did the same, only he did not have to become a face on a T-shirt to do it.

For weeks, he had called out Goldberg, but the bald-pated, manufactured champ would not respond. Jericho mocked the champion's security detail. (By the way, why does a man of such invincibility need the 38th Battalion watching his butt?) Jericho had already faced men who resembled Goldberg, only more talented, and beaten them handily.

WCW promoters and their
(Continued on page 56)

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ON Assignment

By Liz Hunter

AT THE TIME of this writing, there was no WWF World champion. Through the entire month of October, there was no WWF champion. Part of me fears that by the time this text sees magazine print, that coveted strap will still be without an owner (though there was a tournament scheduled for November 15). How could the WWF go so long without having a World champion? You can blame one man for this.

Vincent K. McMahon.

Since WrestleMania XIV, McMahon has ruled the WWF with his version of the iron fist. He has ranted, raved, decreed, and promised a litany of "gifts" to his employees and wrestling fans. All this because of a man he had helped to promote, "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin.

When McMahon looks at Austin these days, he sees an evil monster. If Austin is that evil beast,

then McMahon is Dr. Frankenstein himself. The "bad" doctor strapped the electrodes to his head, raised him to the heavens, and allowed lightning to strike. He saw marketing potential in an expletive-spewing, defiant crank like Austin. T-shirts and action figures flew off the shelves. Austin's popularity started growing at an alarming rate, surpassing even that of another shiny-domed legend who used to wear WWF gold.

The closer "Stone-Cold" got to grabbing that WWF title, the more Vince began to rue the day that Austin ever rose to the top of his company. He envisioned a WWF under Austin's rule and panicked. Then he made the horrendous mistake of saying on the record—on national TV—before WrestleMania that he didn't want Austin to beat Shawn Michaels for the belt. After the big event, McMahon foolishly tried to force Austin to adapt his personality and smooth out his rough edges.

"Stone-Cold" only responded with even more defiance. He had absolutely no interest in being a suit-wearing corporate champ. Belt or no belt, he would conduct himself like he always has, with belligerence and roughhouse tactics. McMahon's fury grew at the indignant titleholder. Soon his fury would blind him.

The WWF is in a state of crisis. Not because of any wrestler, but because of a

(Continued on page 57)



Vince McMahon is so insistent on destroying Steve Austin that he is willing to forsake what was a very good relationship with his son, Shane. Even Shane appreciates "Stone-Cold," but Vince won't change his opinion of him.

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INSIDE WRESTLING CAPSULE PROFILE ²⁷⁶

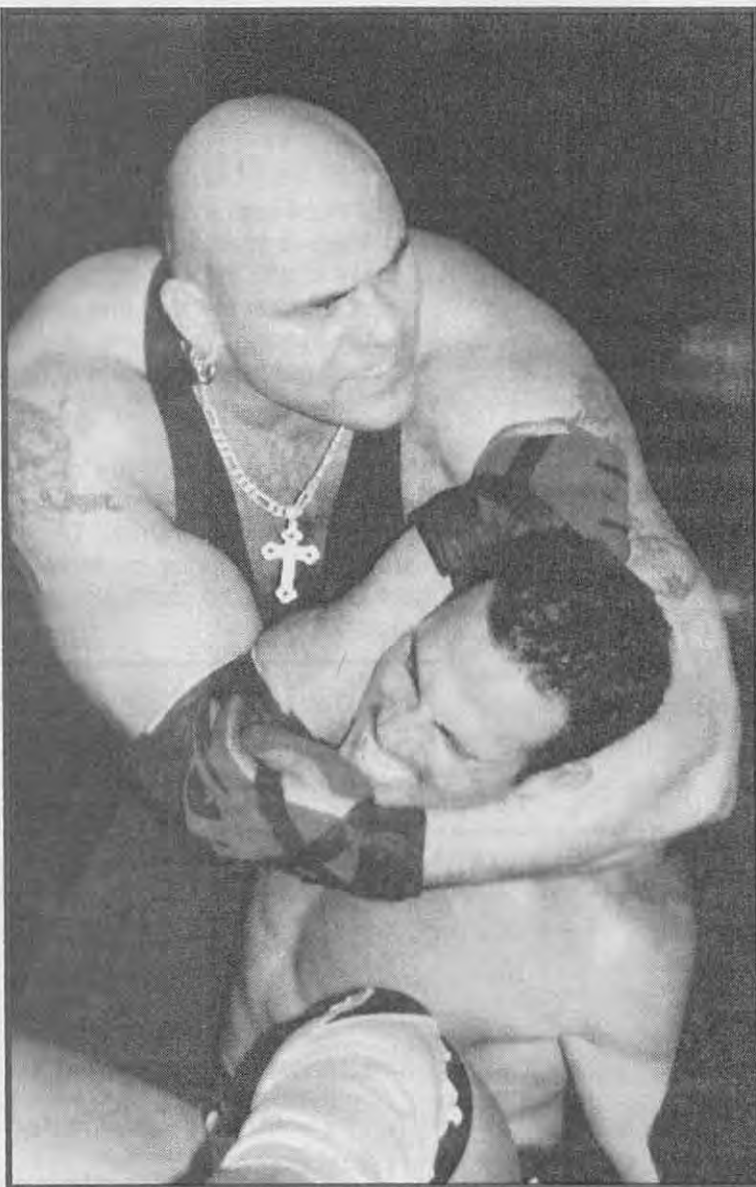
KONNAN

"OYALE! ARRIBA LA Raza!" Those two phrases have transformed Konnan, black-and-white-clad villain, into "K-Dogg," the most streetwise—and some would say popular—member of the NWO Wolfpac ... Hearing the cheers is nothing new to Konnan, who has been one of Mexico's most popular and successful wrestlers for years ... Cuba native trained under Negro Casas and Rey Misterio Sr. ... Wrestled under a mask early in his career in Mexico and Calgary ... Wrestled in the UWA, EMLL, and eventually helped to form AAA in 1992 with Antonio Pena ... Led Mexican invasion of ECW along with Psicosis, Juventud Guerrera, and Rey Misterio Jr. in 1995 ... Nearly beat The Sandman for the ECW heavyweight title in one spirited match ... Joined WCW for the second time in January 1996 and defeated One Man Gang for the U.S. title on January 29 ... Lost the belt to Ric Flair at Bash at the Beach '96 after Woman interfered ... Was so distraught after the loss that he turned rulebreaker

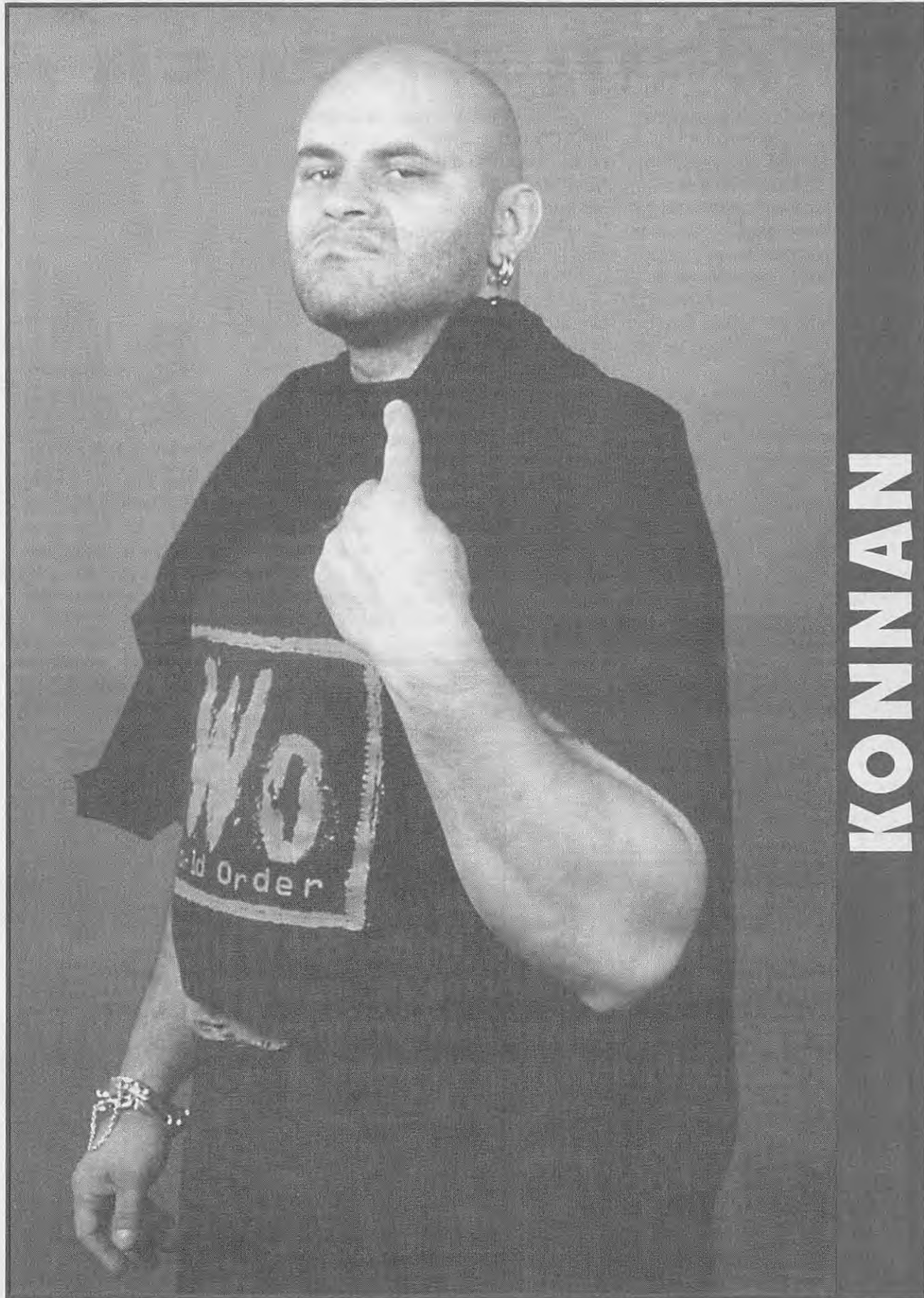
and joined Kevin Sullivan's Dungeon of Doom (*"I went a little loco there"*) ... Became one of WCW's most reviled stars ... Also helped found Mexico's Promo Azteca around this time ... Was recruited by the NWO and began feuding with Rey Misterio Jr. and Juventud Guerrera ... Seriously injured Misterio's

knee during their Mexican death match at Road Wild '97 (*"I got carried away"*) ... Pulled a despicable trick on Juvi before one of their matches on Nitro. Konnan told Guerrera he couldn't wrestle him that night, but he assured him that his substitute was comparable to him in both size and strength ...

Turned out to be 360-pound Scott Norton, who annihilated the 165-pound Guerrera within minutes (*"Sorry I disrespected my homey like that"*) ... Grew tired of Hogan's "me-first" philosophy and sided with Kevin Nash when he formed a rival NWO group in the spring of 1998 ... Was attacked by Curt Hennig and Rick Rude after his U.S. title match against Bill Goldberg at The Great American Bash ... Currently helping Nash, Lex Luger, and Sting fight off attacks from NWO Hollywood (*"Everybody knows the Wolfpac is stronger"*) ... Tried desperately to help recruit "Diamond" Dallas Page into NWO Wolfpac, but his efforts have been futile so far ... Has been re-embraced by WCW fans who can't get enough of his high-spirited ring entrance and pre-match addresses (*"Wolfpac fans are bowdy, bowdy and rowdy, rowdy!"*). □



"K-Dogg" won't hesitate to rough up fellow Luchadore Chavo Guerrero Jr., but WCW fans cheer just about anything Konnan does now. He's gone from being one of the most despised competitors in WCW to one of the most popular.



KONNAN

Where Are They Now

GORDON SOLIE

The legendary broadcaster, once accurately dubbed "The Walter Cronkite Of Wrestling," retired in 1995 and now lives in New Port Richey, Florida. Solie got his start in the sport in 1950 and became known to fans around the country through his work on both the syndicated Florida wrestling programs and the classic *Georgia Championship Wrestling* series that aired on WTBS.

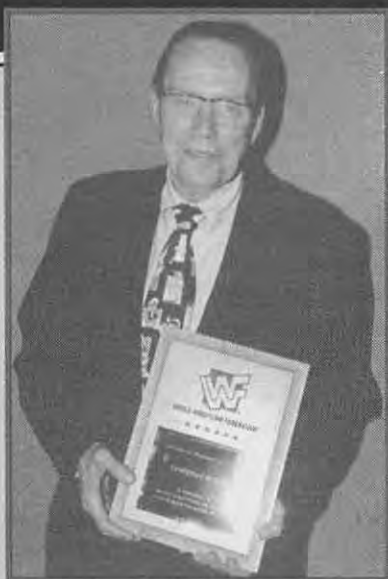
Sadly, Gordon had to cope with tragedy in recent years, as his wife, Eileen, died on July 24, 1997.

"She was everything in the world to me," Gordon said. "It's hard to continue without her." But with the help of sons Greg, Jonard, and Eric, daughters Danise and Pamela, and good friends like NWA President Howard Brody, Gordon found the strength to go on.

"He's an active part of our NWA Florida promotion," Brody notes. "He's still got that glow in his eye when he gets out of the car and sees the arena. Gordon Solie is an icon in this business, and I'm proud to be associated with him."

In February, the WWF honored him during a tour of Florida. And at the NWA's 50th anniversary celebration in New Jersey in October, Gordon was moved to tears when Jim Ross presented him with a lifetime achievement award at a Cauliflower Alley Club banquet.

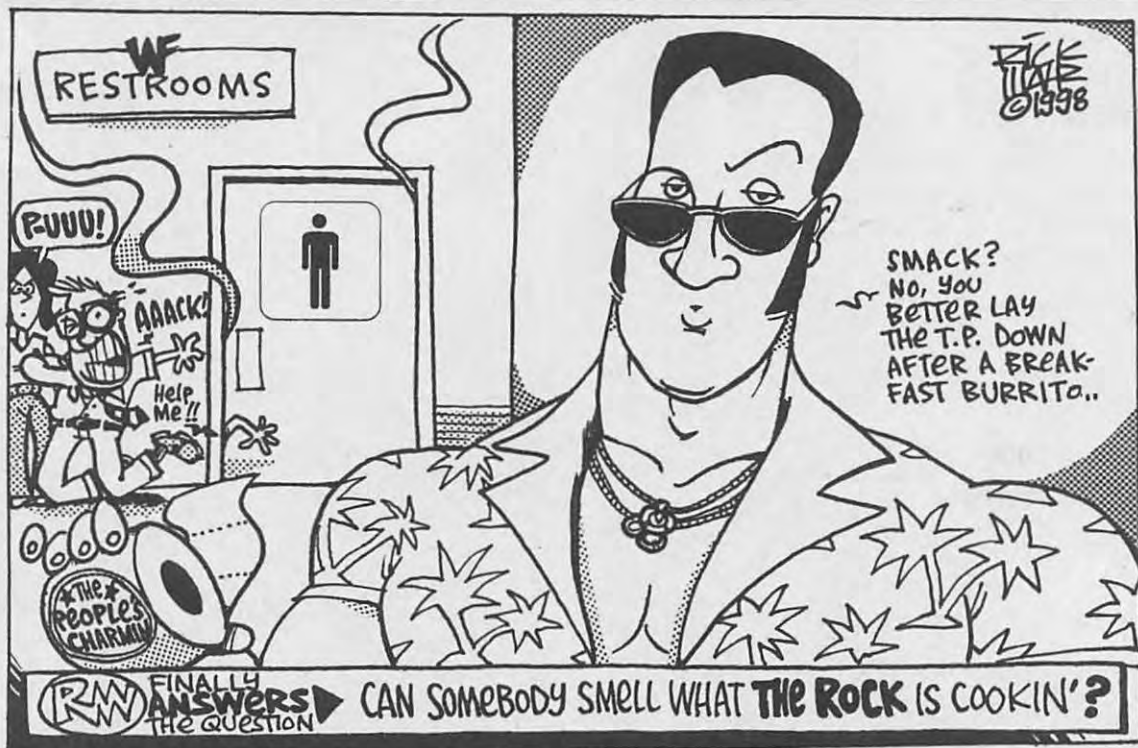
"To see the hundreds of people out there, standing and showing their appreciation, it moved me so much," he recalled. "It's hard to believe how many people come up to me at these kind of events



Back in February, Gordon Solie graciously accepted a lifetime achievement award from the WWF, an organization for which he never broadcasted.

and tell me that I was an important part of their lives. It made everything I did in the past more than well worth it."

Rick Mahr's World



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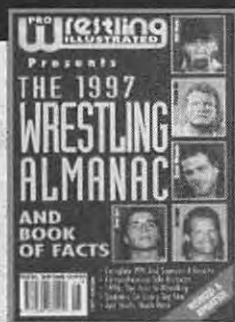
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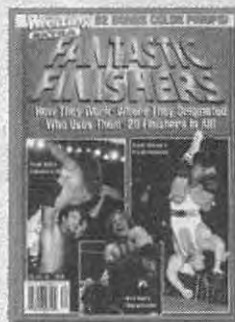
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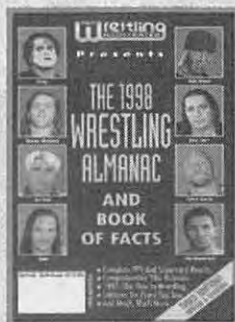
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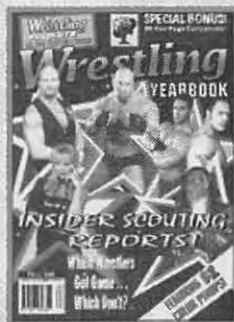
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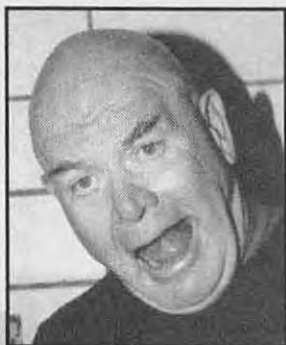
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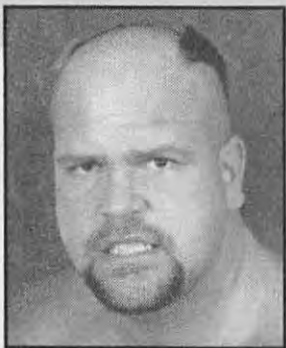
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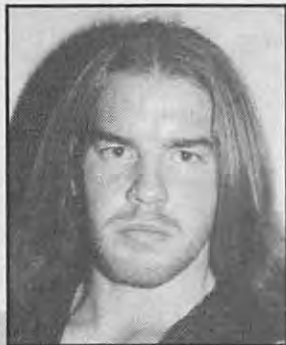
**GEORGE STEELE
VS.
BOB STEELE**



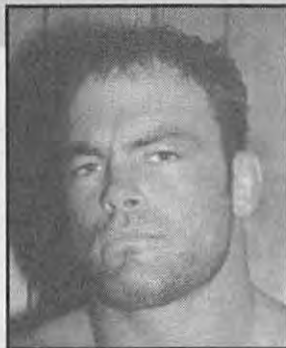
In a battle of unrelated Steeles, "Big" Bob defeated George "The Animal" to win the Grande Wrestling Alliance heavyweight title. George had the advantage early on after working over Bob's arm. Bob retaliated with a series of powerslams. While the referee was out of position, Bob's rival, Hellraiser, surprisingly nailed George with a foreign object. Bob wasn't happy about that, but he pinned the unconscious George, anyway, and won the title.

OTHER BOUTS: Atlas Rivera defeated GWA Intercontinental champ Alexei Taktarov to win the title ... Kwame the Mandingo Warrior won a battle royal ... The Himalaya Playas won a non-title three-way match against GWA tag team champions The Krash Krew and The Ironheads ... Billy Austin defeated GWA cruiserweight champion O-Dogg to win the title ... GWA TV champ Ron Starr defeated Mideknight by disqualification ... H.W. Starr defeated Little Samoan.

WILMINGTON, DE
BY JEFF AMDUR



**CHRISTIAN CAGE
VS.
SHAWN STASIAK**



Cage has been collecting his share of titles of late. On this night, he had to defend his East Coast Wrestling Association heavyweight belt against fellow up-and-coming WWF star Shawn Stasiak. Stasiak attempted to lock up right away, but he couldn't move his foe. He finally started pummeling Cage, but Cage matched his intensity. Eventually, the two went to the mat and exchanged pinfall attempts. When Stasiak tried to stand up, Cage rolled him up for the three-count.

OTHER BOUTS: The Soul Brothers beat Dr. Destruction & Sweet Mr. E ... Mike Quackenbush beat Jeff Peterson ... J.R. Ryder and Chris Krueger co-won a battle royal ... ECWA Mid-Atlantic champ Inferno Kid beat J.R. Ryder and Chris Krueger in a three-way match ... J.J. the Ring Crew Guy beat Mr. Ooh La La in a scaffold match ... Reckless Youth beat Mark Shrader ... Glen Osbourne beat Andrew Martin by disqualification ... Lance Diamond beat Stevie Richards.

ROSEMONT, IL
BY JOSH SHERNOFF



**THE UNDERTAKER
VS.
KANE**

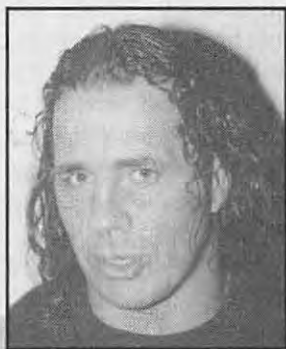


This bout was supposed to declare a new WWF champ—but it wasn't supposed to be the referee, Steve Austin. Kane and 'Taker battled each other cleanly, but Austin kept offering up foreign objects. At one point, Kane choke-slammed Austin and joined 'Taker in attacking him. Later, Paul Bearer and 'Taker knocked Kane out with a chair. But when 'Taker went for the pin, Austin refused to count it. Instead Austin used a "Stone-Cold stunner" on him, counted both men down, and declared himself champ.

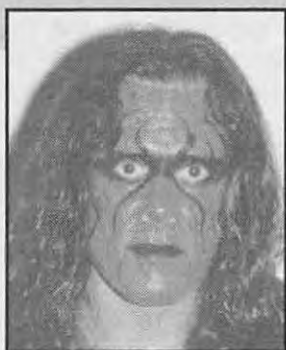
OTHER BOUTS: Al Snow beat Marc Mero ... LOD 2000 beat DOA & Paul Ellering ... Christian Cage beat WWF light heavyweight champ Taka Michinoku for the title ... Goldust beat Val Venis ... X-Pac beat WWF European champ D-Lo Brown for the title ... The Headbangers defeated WWF World tag team champs Billy Gunn & Jesse James by disqualification ... WWF I-C champ Ken Shamrock beat Mankind ... Mark Henry pinned Rocky Maivia.

WRESTLING CAPITALS

**LAS VEGAS, NV
BY NEIL HARRISON**



**BRET HART
VS.
STING**



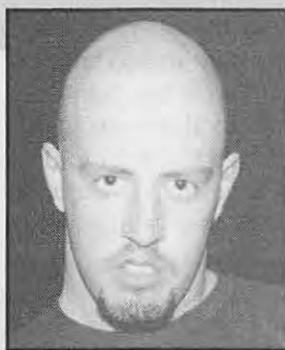
This match began as an all-out brawl. Sting tried to put Bret away with a "Scorpion deathlock," but Hart reached the ropes. Later, Bret tried to plant brass knuckles on Sting, but referee Billy Silverman saw them. After the ref was kayoed, Sting used a superplex on Hart, but missed with a "Stinger splash." That's when Hart whacked Sting with a bat and revived Silverman, who called for the bell when he saw an unconscious Sting in the "sharpshooter."

OTHER BOUTS: WCW TV champ Chris Jericho beat Raven ... Disco Inferno beat Juventud Guerrera ... Wrath beat Meng ... Alex Wright beat Dave Finlay ... Rick Steiner defeated The Giant & Scott Steiner to win the WCW World tag title ... Rick Steiner defeated Scott Steiner ... WCW cruiserweight champ Billy Kidman beat Disco Inferno ... Perry Saturn beat Lodi ... Scott Hall beat Kevin Nash by countout ... Hollywood Hogan pinned The Warrior ... WCW World champ Bill Goldberg pinned Dallas Page.

**CLEVELAND, OH
BY GREG HYLER**



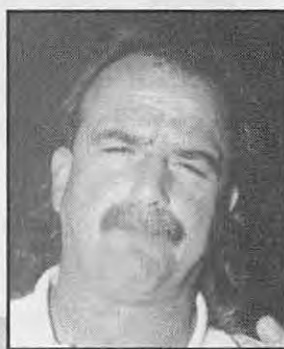
**TOMMY DREAMER
VS.
JUSTIN CREDIBLE**



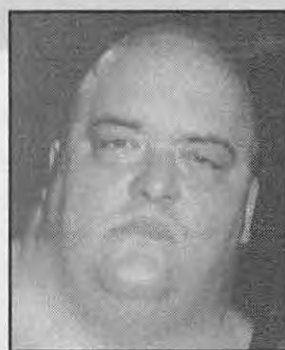
Dreamer got the better of Credible in this extreme death match. As Dreamer went to get a ladder to use as a weapon, Rod Price and Jack Victory attacked him, but Dreamer was saved by New Jack. What had been a singles bout turned into a huge impromptu tag team bout after One Man Gang and Sal E. Graziano joined in and were countered by Dreamer's friend Spike Dudley. Spike hit an "Acid Drop" on Sal, and before Sal could recover, New Jack hit him with a devastating top-rope dive. Dreamer then pinned Graziano to get his team the victory.

OTHER BOUTS: Chris Chetti beat Amish Roadkill ... Jack Victory beat Tommy Rogers ... Masato Tanaka & Mahoney beat The FBI ... Taz beat "Big" Dick Dudley ... Jerry Lynn defeated Ulf Hermann ... Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley beat ECW tag team champs Sabu & Rob Van Dam to win the belts ... ECW champ Shane Douglas beat Super Nova ... Chris Candido defeated Lance Storm.

**TERRYVILLE, CT
BY TIMOTHY A. WALKER**



**JAKE ROBERTS
VS.
KING KONG BUNDY**



Bundy used his nearly 200-pound weight advantage to wear down Roberts in the early stages of this match, but as Bundy applied a chinlock, Roberts managed to slam his elbow into Bundy's stomach to break free. After several failed attempts, Roberts finally knocked Bundy off his feet with a clothesline. Bundy never fully recovered after that. He tried to retaliate, but he couldn't mount much of an offense and was finally finished off by a DDT from Roberts.

OTHER BOUTS: Sid Vicious pinned John Diamond to capture the vacant North East Wrestling heavyweight title ... Tiger Khan defeated Tony DeVito to win the NEW TV title ... Primo Carnera III defeated Ralph Mosca ... Tiny the Terrible defeated Half Nelson in a ladder match to win the NEW midget title ... Teddy Reade beat Juan T ... Johnny Handsome defeated Juan Xavier ... NEW light heavyweight champ Ray Odyssey pinned T.W. Sledge.



Matt Brock's **Plain** *Speaking*

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

Anybody who thought they had seen the last of Steve Austin in the WWF at Judgment Day must not understand this sport. Everyone should have known as soon as Austin told Vince McMahon that he hadn't seen the last of him that "Stone-Cold" would find a way to return to the WWF. Shane McMahon, the son of Vince McMahon,

reinstated Austin against his father's wishes, but I don't mind saying right here that I smell a rat. There's a big thing called pride in this sport we call wrestling, and Vince Jr.'s was in big danger after Austin failed to declare a winner in the Kane vs. Undertaker match at Judgment Day. That left Vince with two problems: One, he had angrily guaranteed that he would fire Austin if he didn't declare a winner in the match; and two, Austin has had a lot to do with the WWF's sellout crowds, high pay-per-view buy rates, and high TV

ratings over the past nine months or so. Translation: Austin meant money to McMahon. The way this reporter sees it, McMahon had to fire Austin to save face, and he had to find a way to have him rehired and save money. So father and son concocted a plan in which it would look like Shane was going against his father's wishes by reinstating Austin. That way, Vince looks like he did what he promised he'd do, and the WWF keeps its golden goose. Call me a cynic, call me an old-fashioned journalist, but as my first editor told me, "Matt, if you want to find the real story about anything, just follow the money trail. That's always your answer." Meanwhile, Vince is publicly huffing and puffing and going out of his mind over Austin's return, but privately he's counting his money. Life has worked out very well for McMahon and company over the past year, and there's no reason to change that. I thought I smelled a rat when Shane McMahon joined the company, and now it looks like my suspicions have come true. Not that I know any of this for sure, but I know this much: Follow the money trail ...

GREENSBORO, NC



SHANE MCMAHON

Couldn't resist attending the NWA's anniversary card here, not because I'm a sucker for anniversaries, but because any card with Steve Williams, Abdullah the Butcher, and Tully Blanchard goes down in my book as a must-see. For the record, Williams, still as tough as ever, won a battle royal, Abdullah pinned T. Rantula, and Blanchard lost in a four-way tag team match. No matter. Count among the finer things in life tough wrestlers who never back down. Three of the finest were on this card, although it should be added that Abdullah doesn't know enough to back down. As for Williams, the face is scarred, the legs are scarred, the whole body is scarred,

CHERRY HILL, NJ

but he's still dangerous because the word "quit" isn't in his vocabulary, and he doesn't care much about pain. It just doesn't affect him. Nights like this make me glad I devoted my life to this sport.

The not-so-new news out of Halloween Havoc here was that Rick Steiner is a bit too trusting for a wrestler, while the other not-so-new news is that Bill Goldberg is too good for the rest of WCW, "Diamond" Dallas Page included. Also, Hollywood Hogan defeated The Warrior in a match that didn't come close to matching the excitement of their first encounter, back in 1990. Don't know what possessed Warrior to come

out of retirement, other than the obvious answer of a big contract, but it was a mistake. Warrior's legend grew with each day he stayed retired, and now it's shrinking with each day of his comeback. Hogan's legend shrinks along with it. Used to be a time when Hogan didn't need anybody's help to win. Now it seems he never wins without cheating. This time, he used a fireball and his nephew Horace, who struck Warrior with a chair. Obviously, Hogan doesn't give a hoot about this sport, but you'd think he'd give a hoot about his legacy. While Hogan and Warrior were going at it, I had the urge to turn to the guy sitting next to me and ask, "Didn't they used to be wrestlers?" Then I realized the guy sitting next to me was a 13-year-old in Warrior makeup, and I realized he wouldn't have any idea what I was talking about. Anyway, if memory serves, Warrior was never such great shakes to begin with, while Hogan kicked and punched his way to WWF World title defenses on the average of twice a month. If you're looking for legacies, look to Lou Thesz, Bruno Sammartino, and Ric Flair. Forget about these two.

LAS VEGAS, NV



HOGAN VS. WARRIOR

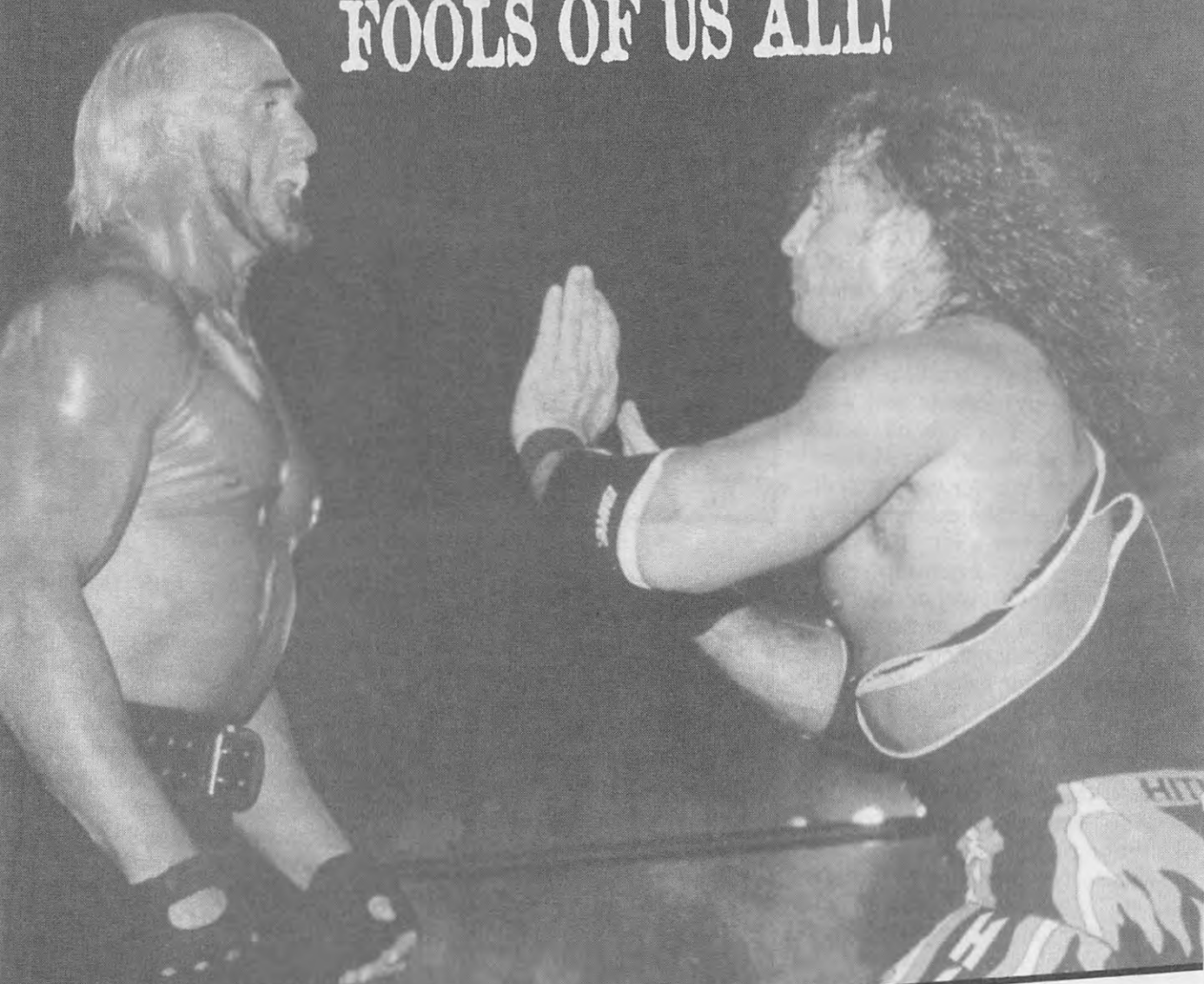
Apparently caused a brief ruckus last month when I thought out loud about retiring from this gig. Don't know what got the best of me. It's usually a mistake to think out loud, and that little item in this space was no exception. Got about a hundred letters and a few more phone messages, which annoyed the heck out of Dave Lenker back at the offices in Ambler, Pennsylvania, and also got me to thinking that maybe my time hasn't come. Then again, maybe it has. This much is certain:

NEW YORK, NY

When the time comes, I'll make the decision without anybody else's help, unless Saks plans on pulling the plug, which is unlikely. He might not know what he's doing all the time, but he knows to respect his elders. Besides, Rosenbaum almost had a heart attack when he heard the news. Called me up at three in the morning, woke me out of a sound sleep, and said, "Brock, if you retire, I'm going with you." If that ain't enough to scare a grown man ... So, like I said, the next time you read about me retiring, I'll have retired. Until then, you'll have to live with the ugly face at the top of this page. □

"WE KNEW YOU'D FALL FOR IT!"

HOW HOGAN AND BRET MADE
FOOLS OF US ALL!



Photos by Duane Long

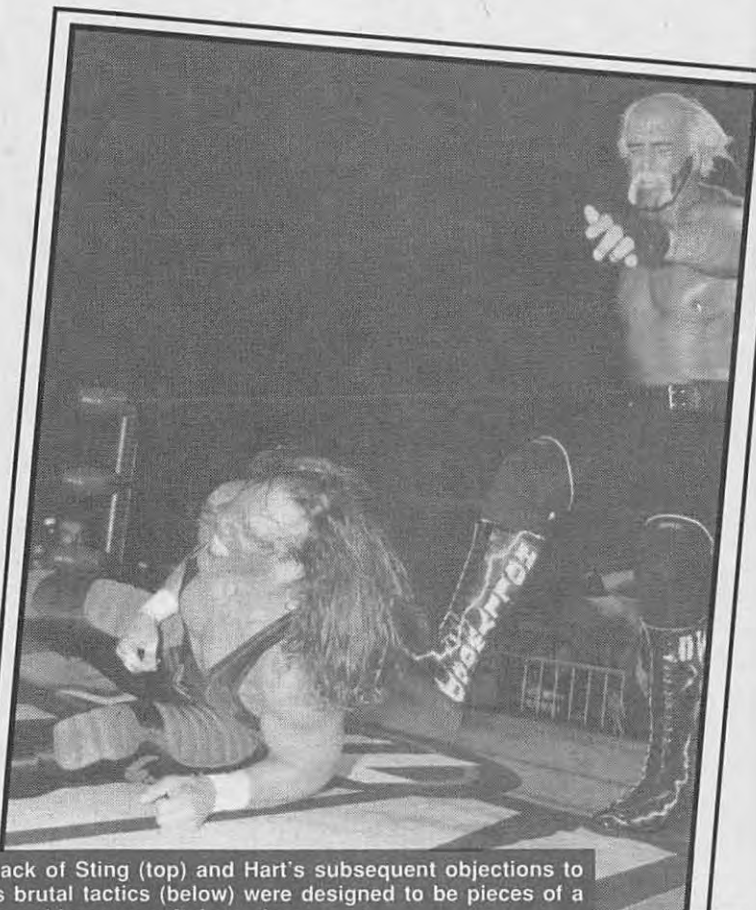
Hollywood Hogan advances on Bret Hart, who seems to be begging for mercy. "Seems to be," because in reality, it was all just an act.

Conspiracy theorists love to speculate about the fate of Jimmy Hoffa and a possible second gunman in the JFK assassination. Add the Bret Hart-Hollywood Hogan plot to the long list of mysteries wrapped in riddles. Who knew what? And when did they know it?

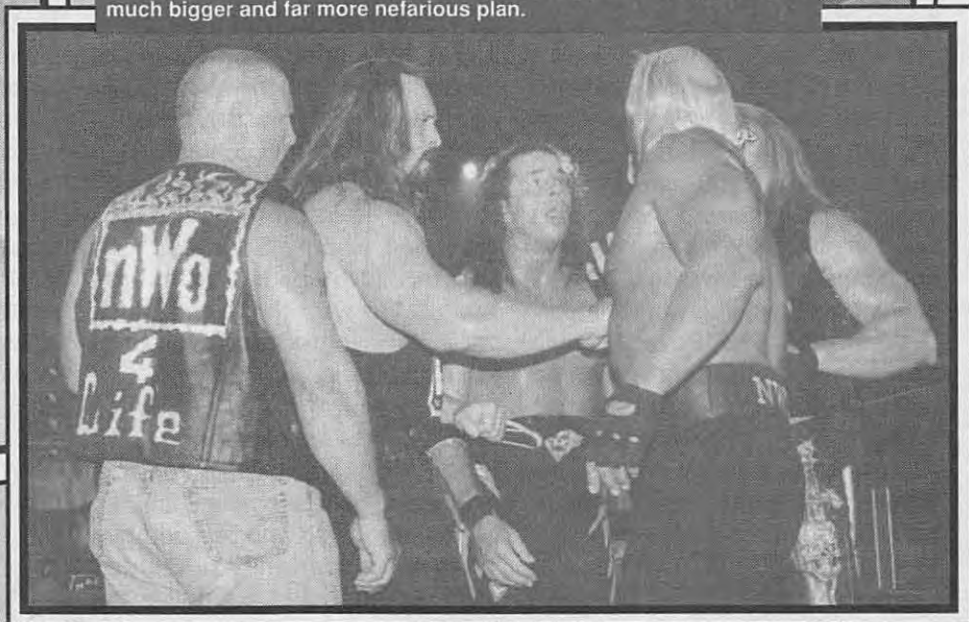
By Steve Anderson

THE SOULFUL LOOK in his eyes. The stress of betrayal etched deeply into the lines of his forehead. The regret noticeable in his voice as he humbly addressed a *Nitro* crowd.

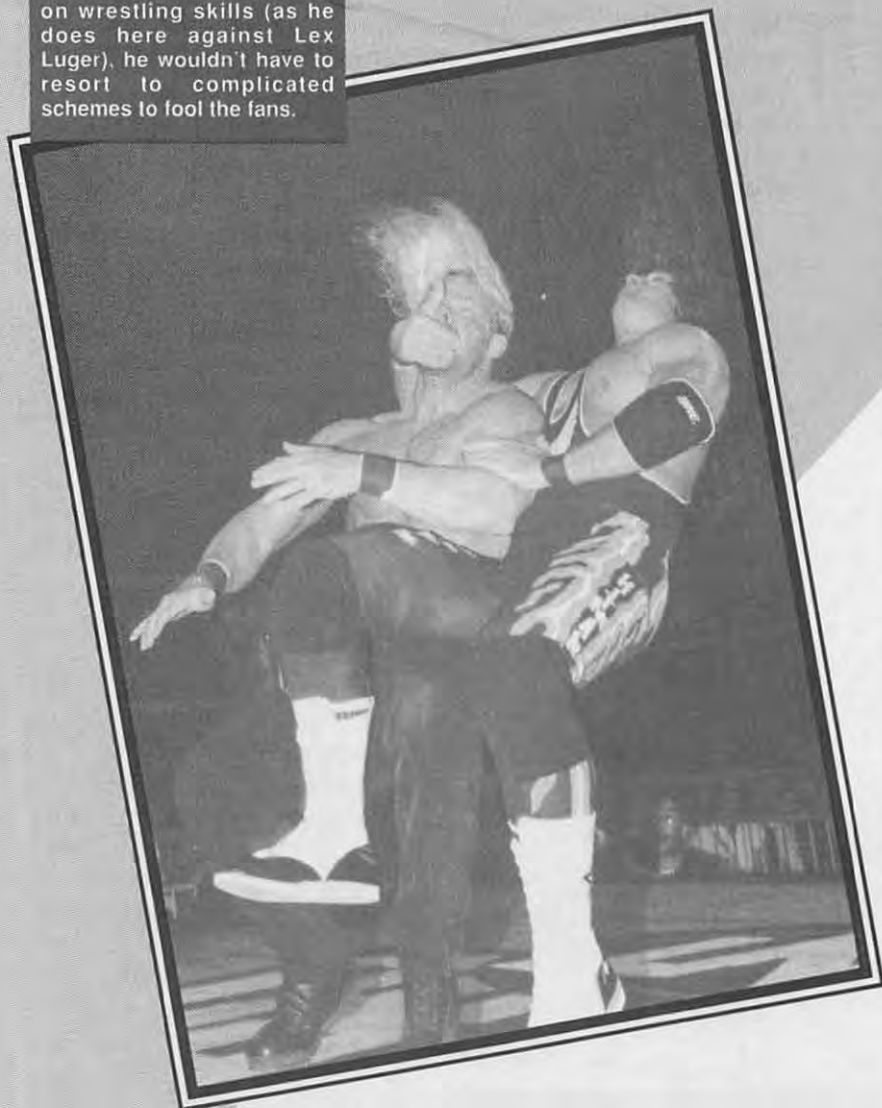
For all intents and purposes, Bret Hart was sorry for turning against WCW fans and allying himself with Hollywood Hogan. He poured out his heart to the masses in attendance that night. He vowed to never let them down again if they would grant him one



Hogan's attack of Sting (top) and Hart's subsequent objections to Hollywood's brutal tactics (below) were designed to be pieces of a much bigger and far more nefarious plan.



If the "Hitman" concentrated on wrestling skills (as he does here against Lex Luger), he wouldn't have to resort to complicated schemes to fool the fans.



more chance.

Just one more chance.

What people forgot was that Bret Hart the wrestler always wanted to be Bret Hart the actor. Just like in his high-profile appearances on *Lonesome Dove*, Hart was playing a role: hero. He was not conceding his wrongs; he was conning anyone who would listen.

Weeks later, he proved that his apology was nothing more than an act when he turned against Sting to *again* help Hollywood Hogan. As the "Hitman" and Hogan walked back to the dressing room, they looked into a TV camera as if to say, "We knew you'd fall for it!"

Fall for it we did. Big time. We believed Bret. We rooted for him

as he showed off his newfound hatred for Hogan. But it was not hatred that drove the WCW U.S. champion; he was driven by a need to connive and confuse.

How could it have happened? How did it happen? Who approached whom? Sources close to both men provided INSIDE WRESTLING with the pieces of a very complicated and well-constructed puzzle.

Before his faux fan favorite turn, Hart was obsessed with Sting, the man he claimed stole his finisher. He seemingly lobbied for his friendship and rescued him when the opportunity presented itself, yet he could not get to the Wolfpac member due to his own

alliance with Hogan. Hart approached Hogan with the idea of a phony fight, a disagreement that would appear to rip the bond that the two had developed.

Something so convincing that everyone would believe it.

What follows is the five-step process that the two men mapped out:

Step 1: Hart would turn up the heat on Sting by trying to become his new best friend. While Sting initially rejected the notion, he surely must have thought that Hart would inevitably make a better ally than enemy. In the war between the Hollywood and Wolfpac groups, strange bedfellows would make for a stronger faction. This was all Hart's idea. Hogan wasn't sure Sting would buy any of it, but Hart insisted that he was a good enough actor to pull it off.

Step 2: Hogan would attack Sting with a chair. Hart, with a legacy of fair play, would object to Hogan's underhanded tactics. He would say that this was not the way to do it. It was not what they agreed upon—which would further stir the emotion in Sting, along with the fans, and force all to re-evaluate the "Hitman."

Step 3: NWO Hollywood would attack Hart in a very public venue, which turned out to be Fall Brawl. Hart would be forced to team with Hogan, which is what he wanted all along, and then he would be attacked by his own team. This would gain sympathy for Hart and inject legitimacy into his supposed philosophical turn. In addition, he would fake some type of injury.

Step 4: Hart would publicly apologize to the fans for his actions. He would make it clear that he did not expect forgiveness right away, but he would earn it in the near future. Roddy Piper's unwitting participation solidified the believability when he confronted Hart and told him that he basically had one more chance.

Step 5: Hart and Sting would challenge Hogan to a match on

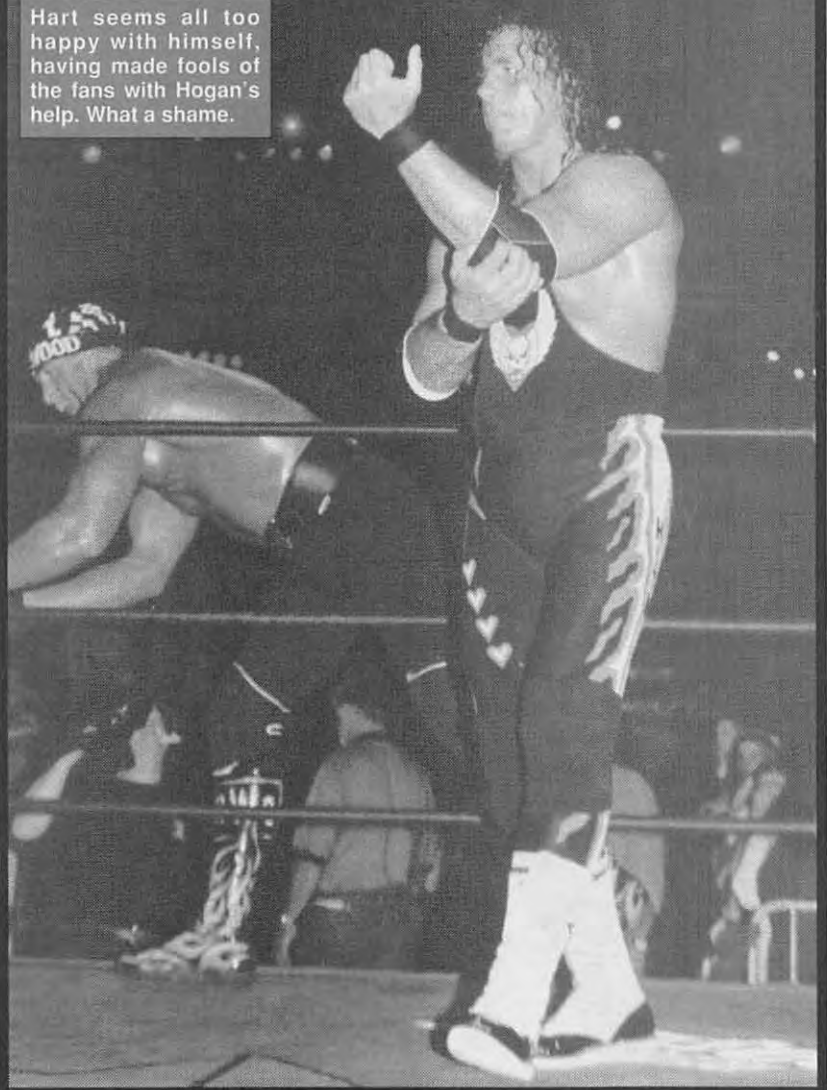
that night, with each man facing Hollywood. Hart battling Hogan would further validate the "hatred" between the two. Hogan would take Hart out of the match and force a vulnerable and gullible Sting into Hogan's next bout. Hart would come back, attack, and reveal his true allegiance.

Obviously, all the steps worked perfectly. Hart's second betrayal probably had more impact than the first. When he first joined Hogan's side, Hart still had a bitter taste in his mouth from his WWF days and was not too far removed from the "anti-American" rants that used to fill the airwaves of the WWF's *Raw Is War*. But the second one stung a great



Hogan is the victim of a double-team attack by Luger and Sting, but in the end it was the fans who were victimized by a double-team of Hogan and Hart.

Hart seems all too happy with himself, having made fools of the fans with Hogan's help. What a shame.



deal more.

Some say that if rulebreakers spent as much time on ring strategy as they did on chicanery, there would be little need to get around the regulations. But Hart and Hogan are a different breed. The two former heroes derive pleasure from causing others pain. Their strategy is not focused on how to win, but on how to deceive to gain an advantage that will lead to victory.

So Hart and Hogan gloat and say, "We knew you'd fall for it!" while other Tuesday morning quarterbacks say, "I told you so!" Hindsight aside, Hogan and Hart made fools of fans, Sting, and anyone who was taken in by this scam. Two long-time fan favorites and two men likely to one day return to the "good side" might have now hit the point of no return. A career of rulebreaking might be their fate.

For now, that controversial status will suffice, as so many of today's fans cheer the bad guys. But what about tomorrow, when perhaps the line between good and bad becomes clearer yet again? What will Hogan and Hart do then?

Well, there is always acting. □

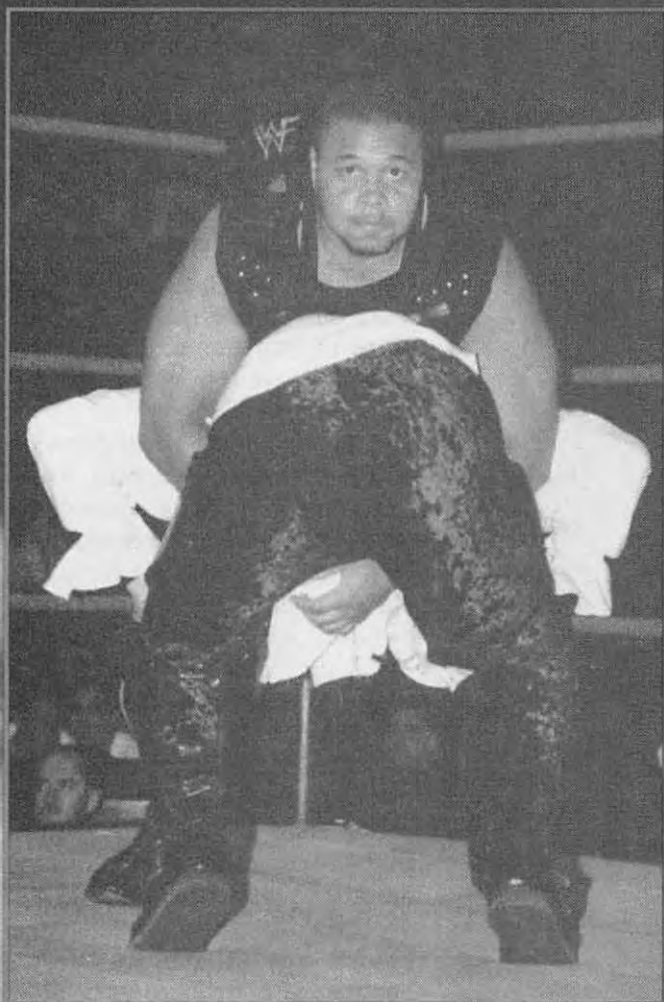
From Out On The Street To The WWF Elite



HOW
HIGH
CAN
D-LO
GO?

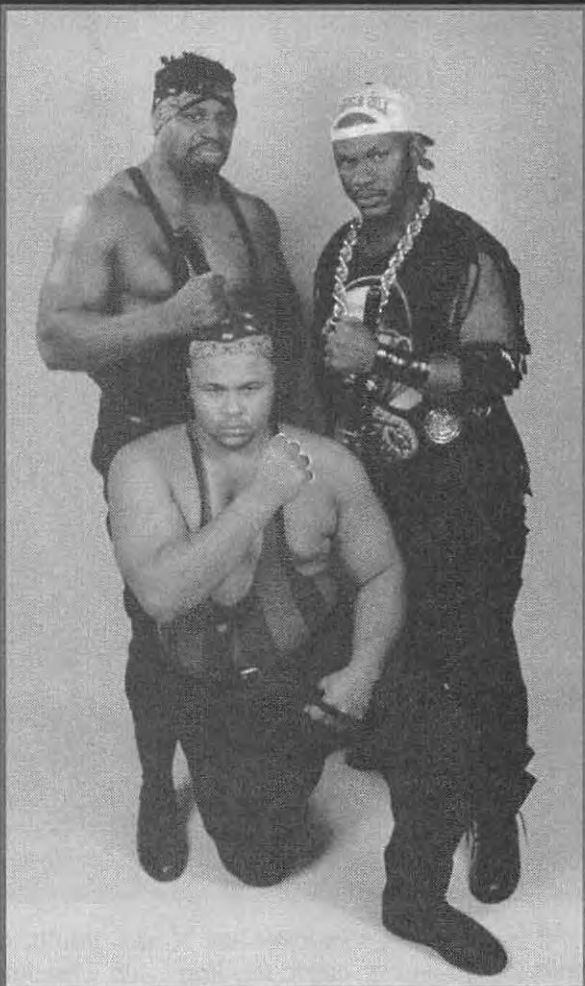
He doesn't have that WWF European belt anymore, but D-Lo still has plenty of enthusiasm and some serious career momentum!

D-Lo Brown shed the bow tie, donned some tights, and shocked the wrestling world by winning the European title this summer. Now his competitors are running from him, for they fear D-Lo just might be the real deal



Even as he prepares to power-bomb Gangrel, Brown seems to be looking toward the future—and better opponents.

Four years ago, Brown (kneeling) served as a bodyguard to Gangstas Mustafa Saed (left) and New Jack (right) in Smoky Mountain Wrestling. He has come a long way in four years.



By Bryan Ethier

"Oz never did give nothing to the Tin Man

That he didn't—didn't already have."

—'70s country rockers America

THERE ARE THOSE who stick a pointed finger in D-Lo Brown's chest and cry foul in regard to the wrestler's hard-shell chest protector. "This gives you an unfair advantage!" they claim. "A

chest protector? Why not a bullet-proof vest? Why not a suit of armor?"

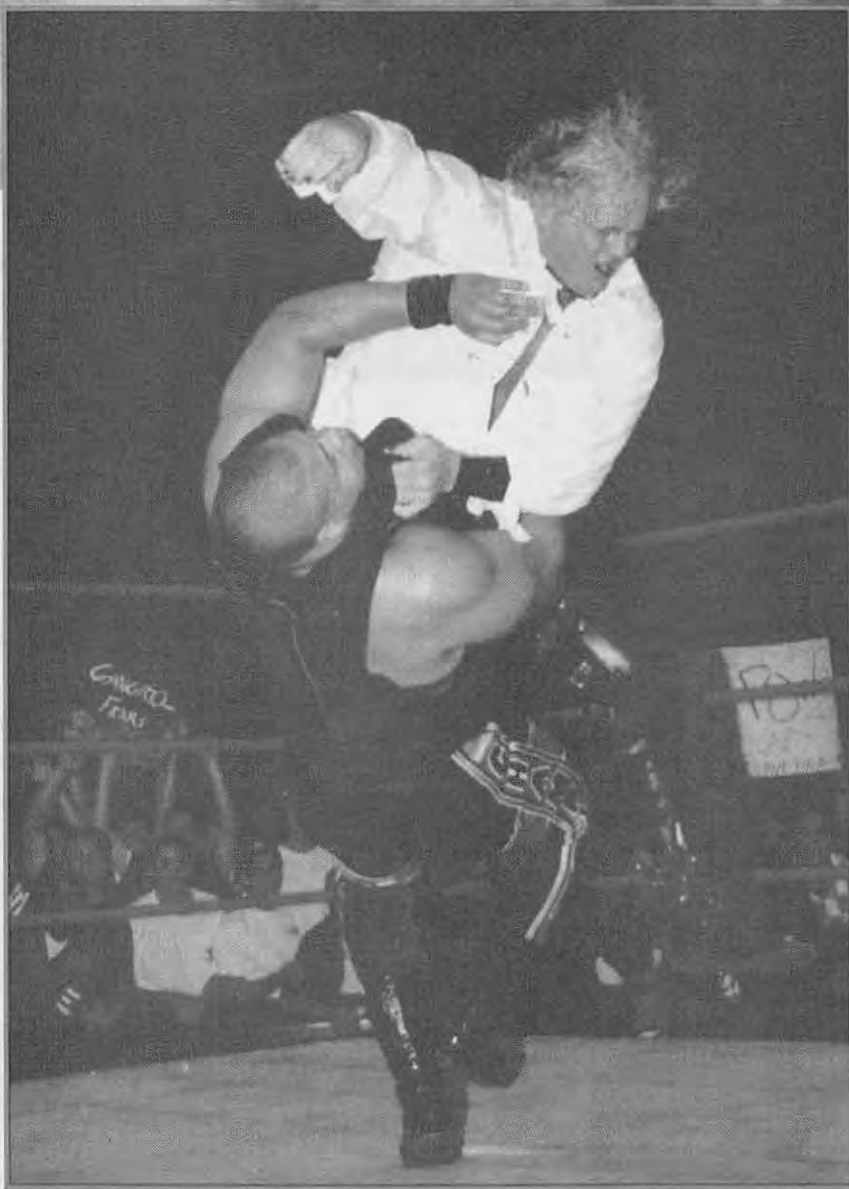
But the cynics don't know that D-Lo Brown did not acquire his skills, his courage, his strength, or his savvy from a chest protector any more than the Tin Man developed heart, the Cowardly Lion courage, or the Scarecrow a brain from the department store knickknacks provided by The Wizard of Oz himself.

No, the former king of the

WWF's European microworld is a man born with the steel of an Austin, the smarts of a McMahon, the heart of a Mankind.

D-Lo Brown, the former bow tie-wearing toady of Faarooq and The Nation of Domination; D-Lo Brown, the erstwhile interfeerer extraordinaire; D-Lo, once the obscure security guard for Smoky Mountain Wrestling's Gangstas.

Would you believe he won the WWF's European title not once, but *twice* this year?



Though he takes some punishment from men like Gangrel, Brown knows how to rebound to win.

"I can't believe this joker has a finishing maneuver called the frog splash," sneered Dan Severn, who injured D-Lo in a match and thus prompted him to wear the chest protector. "When did this guy get good anyway?"

Good question.

D-Lo Brown's gold and winding road to prominence began neither in a dusty rural town in Kansas, nor in Hell's Kitchen, as some fans seem to believe. D-Lo did not grow up on crowded urban streets as much as he developed a scrappy, street-smart style in the ring.

Although little is known about

his youth, over time, snippets of his wrestling past have surfaced to the general public.

His debut in the sport came in 1994, when fans of Smoky Mountain questioned the identity of the stone-faced 6'1", 305-pound bodyguard of The Gangstas. "This guy doesn't look like a security guard," fans remarked. "He should be out there kicking some butt himself."

And soon D-Lo Brown was in the squared circle, at first acting as interfering savior to New Jack and Mustafa Saed when the situation warranted (which it often did).

Occasionally, Brown donned tights and participated in legitimate one-on-one matches; if fans weren't impressed by his raw style, they were by his anaconda-thick forearms.

D-Lo's modest wrestling strides came to an abrupt halt when SMW folded its tents, leaving the game-yet-raw grappler seeking an outlet for his budding talents. He tiptoed through the world of independent wrestling and made a name for himself in Puerto Rico, where fans admired his ruthless, fight-for-survival style.

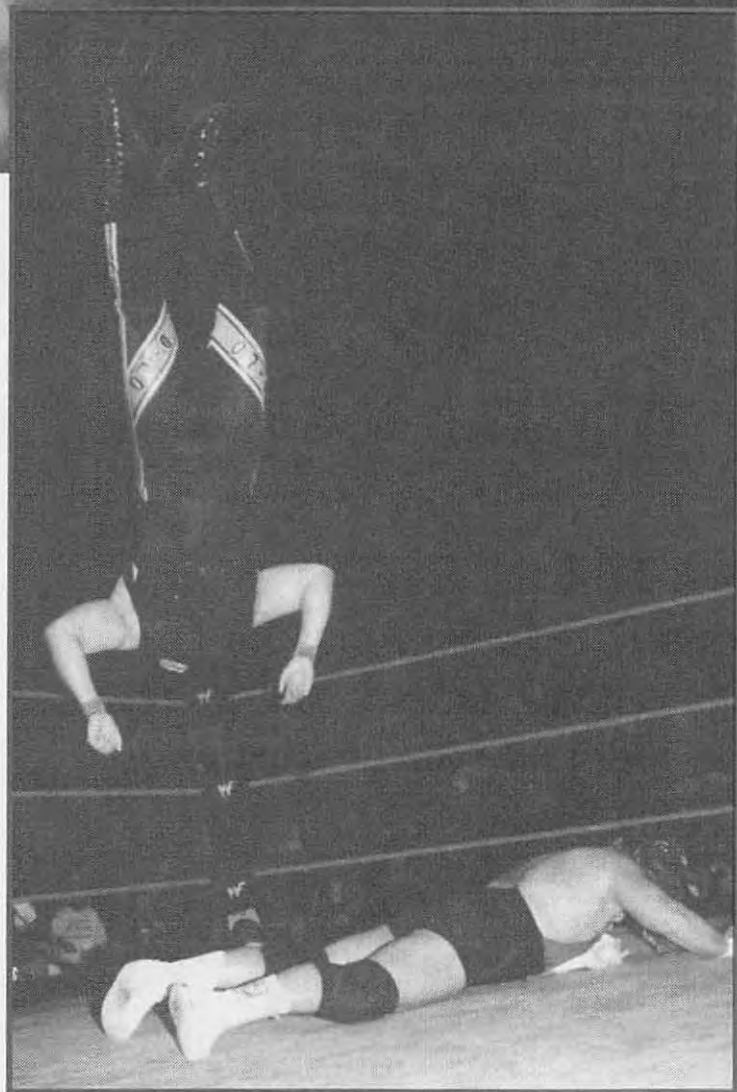
Then, in one of the more mysterious events of the last few years, D-Lo joined The Nation of Domination, originally headed by the strong-willed Faarooq. In the group's fledgling days, D-Lo Brown was little more than a bouncer, a bodyguard who stood behind Faarooq, his arms folded, his bow tie always crisp and clean.

D-Lo said little, but he was always there to watch, to learn, to nod his head in agreement, to be respectful of the clique's leader.

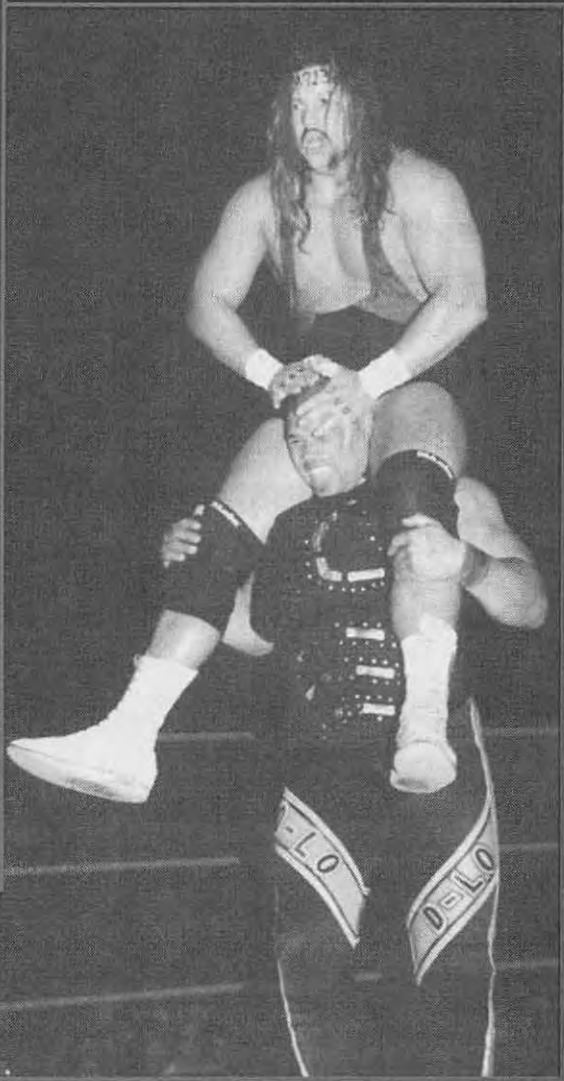
His chance to play a larger role in the group came after Rocky Maivia forced Faarooq out as NOD head. In D-Lo, Maivia saw an ally who could protect his own back; he also saw a competent wrestler, a loyal colleague who could help unify a group that had been fragmented under Faarooq.

Of course, we know what happened next. The bow tie is gone, the stern demeanor replaced by a jovial manner befitting a man who is truly enjoying his success.

"I can't tell you how much being European champion means to me," D-Lo said just a few days before his second reign as champ was ended by X-Pac. "I always



Against a skilled competitor like Al Snow, Brown is highly effective both in the air (left) and with his strength (below). It's this consistency that has helped to make him a champion.



knew I had it in me to be a champion, even when others doubted me, when stupid people like Hunter Hearst Helmsley ridiculed me for being a group flunky. Look who's the king now, Hunter!"

In the ring, D-Lo combines the power and fury of Faarooq with the savvy and dash of Maivia. He has, it seems, learned well from his teachers.

"It took D-Lo a while to break out of his shell, but I think that was good," said WWF commentator Michael Cole. "He is immensely confident, well-skilled, and even likable at times. While other members of The Nation had roller-coaster careers, D-Lo's career has slowly risen and improved over the last two years. The sky seems to be the limit for him."

The sky is the limit, if the rest of the WWF management and grapplers give him his just due, which begs the question: At exactly what point does a two-time former European champion become a serious WWF World heavyweight title contender?

"Right now," said a WWF insider who spoke under terms of anonymity, "Vince [McMahon] loves D-Lo's hustle and perseverance. He'd like nothing better than to see D-Lo regularly match up against Helmsley, Steve Austin, Undertaker and the other elite members of the federation."

But do "Triple-H," Undertaker,

Austin, and the rest really want to enter the ring against a wrestler whose skills are just beginning to blossom?

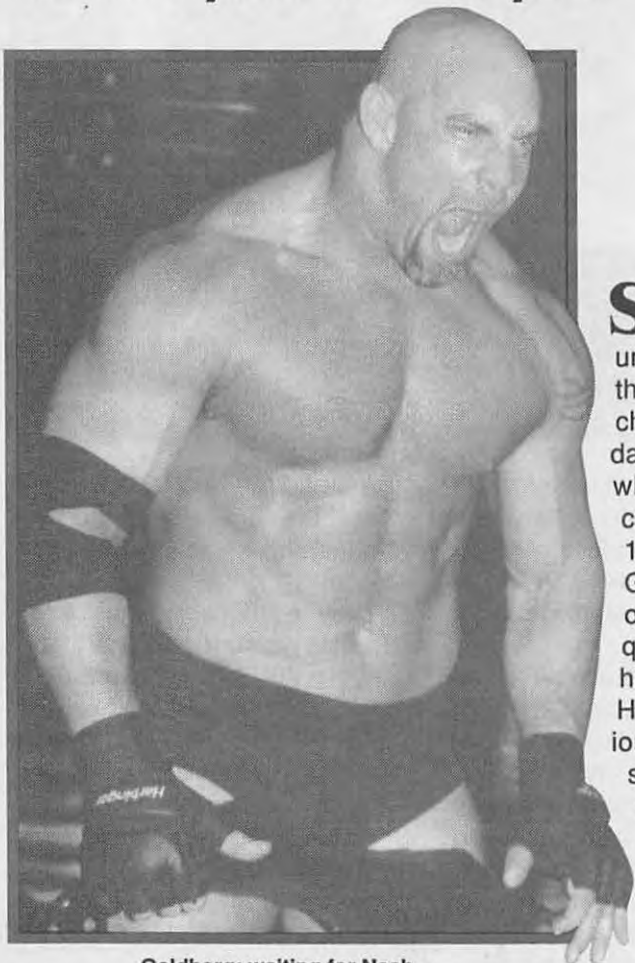
"They're a little wary of D-Lo," said that same inside source. "I think the WWF mainstays look at D-Lo and wonder, *What's up with this guy? How did he suddenly become so successful?*"

D-Lo simply followed the WWF's yellow brick road and discovered that all the skills, savvy, and perseverance he needed to become a successful wrestler had always been within him. □

WRESTLING'S TOP STARS

What's
Ahead For
'99!

One year ago, we barely knew Bill Goldberg. Was he Eric Bischoff's accountant? D-Lo Brown as European champ was a foreign concept, indeed. And Vince McMahon was still a nice guy. Will that stop us from dusting off our crystal balls this year? No way!



Goldberg: waiting for Nash

WCW

BILL GOLDBERG

Slowly marching from obscurity, the ex-Atlanta Falcon captured imaginations everywhere this year with his undefeated streak, knocked off Raven for the U.S. title, then won the WCW World championship. The supreme challenge for Goldberg is to surpass his own high standard. Achieving a 150-0 record wasn't quite as difficult when about 75 percent of those wins were over mid-carders. Maintaining that undefeated streak throughout 1999 will be asking *a lot*, especially considering that Goldberg will be defending the title against WCW's best on a weekly—sometimes nightly—basis. The next question is this: Who can beat Goldberg? The champ has disposed of his primary contenders—including Hollywood Hogan, The Giant, and Sting—in quick fashion. Kevin Nash, boasting a unique blend of size and speed, will be his toughest test in 1999. If Nash can't do the job, "The Millennium Man" will enter the year 2000 as World champion.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Hollywood Hogan for the WCW World title on July 6 in Atlanta.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Had his dressing room vandalized by NWO Hollywood.

Bret: Savage
attack coming?



BRET HART

It's disturbing that Bret Hart's worst moment in 1997, his controversial WWF World title loss to Shawn Michaels, made more news than his WCW accomplishments in 1998. Hart's chameleon-like existence, teasing fans with loyalty to WCW while currying favor with Hollywood Hogan, has alienated most of the people who supported him during the Survivor Series scandal. Yet, through it all, Hart refuses to become a full-time member of NWO Hollywood. In 1999, members of the black and white will resent Hart's lack of commitment to the cause. Plus, Hart's U.S. title reign, and possibly his career, will be in jeopardy when Randy Savage recovers from knee surgery. Look for the "Hitman" to be injured by Savage in a sneak-attack early in 1999. Remember, it was a vicious attack by Hart and Eric Bischoff that sidelined Savage in the first place. Hart's best bet is to try to maintain his current status as U.S. champ. Even his scientific skills cannot surpass the power of World champ Goldberg.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Lex Luger for his second U.S. title on August 13 (three days after Luger beat him) in Fargo, North Dakota.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Was pinned by Sting in their first-ever one-on-one meeting on May 26.

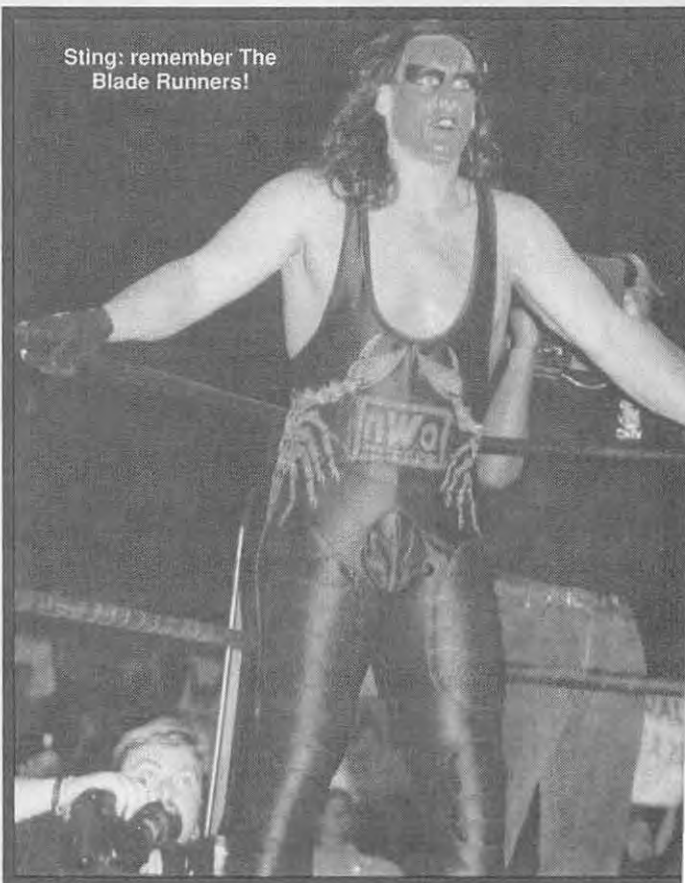
STING

Stling had a fantastic year or a pathetic year, depending on whom you ask. Sting did hold the WCW World title, off and on, for a couple of months in early-1998. Lex Luger held the title only five days in 1997, and that was enough to earn him the *PWI* Wrestler of the Year Award. Sting's problem is that he failed in the expectations game. That will continue in 1999. WCW World champion Bill Goldberg has already defeated Sting, although in controversial fashion, in front of a national audience. Since The Warrior will probably lose the same expectations game in 1999, the old Blade Runners will make a bid for the WCW World tag team title, injecting some desperately needed excitement to that division. Sting and The Warrior have proven their singles talents, but neither has had extensive success in the tag wars. If this happens, look for the two face-painters to be dominant throughout 1999.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Won the vacant WCW World title by beating Hollywood Hogan on February 22 in San Francisco.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Stripped of the World title by the Executive Committee because of the controversy surrounding his wins over Hollywood Hogan at Starrcade '97 and during a rematch the following night.

Sting: remember The
Blade Runners!

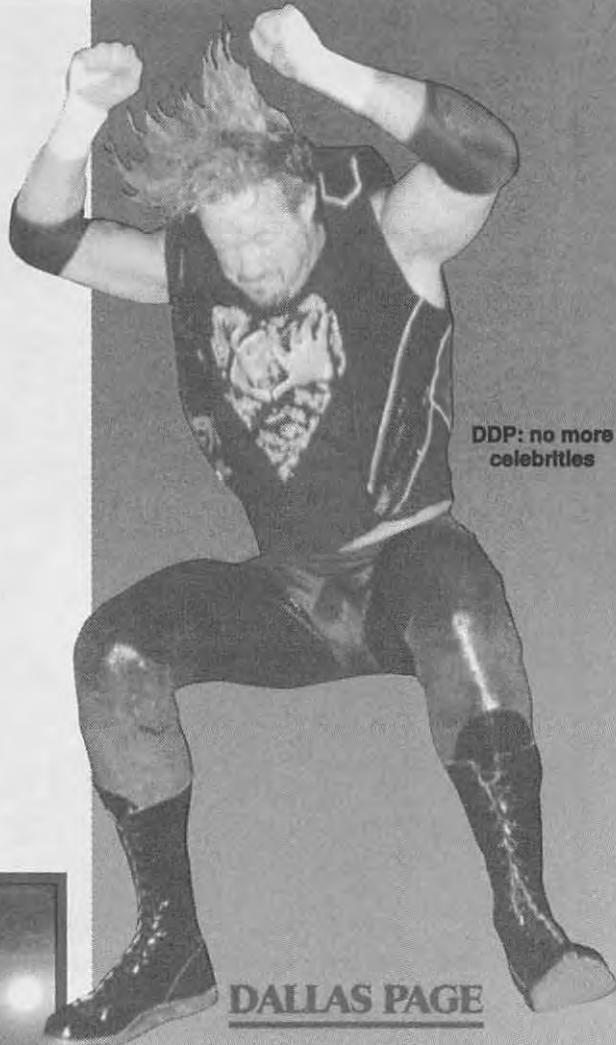


THE GIANT

We predict The Giant will hit the 580-pound mark by the end of 1999. That's not the prediction The Giant or his fans are looking for, but we don't see much else happening in his career next year. He must leave NWO Hollywood, kick the smoking habit, and whip himself into shape. The Giant isn't obese by any stretch, but a commitment to physical health would be a sign that he's committing himself to his career again. Unfortunately, we don't see it happening. The Giant seems content hanging around his "buds" and being a thug for Hogan and Bischoff. On a positive note, The Giant will focus more on a film career and with his engaging personality, acting should be a natural for him. His role in *The Waterboy* might do the same for him that *The Princess Bride* did for Andre: win over the critics and make him a Hollywood name.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Teamed with Scott Hall to win the WCW World tag team title on July 20 in Salt Lake City.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Lost to Kevin Nash at Souled Out and suffered a neck injury when Nash power-bombed him.



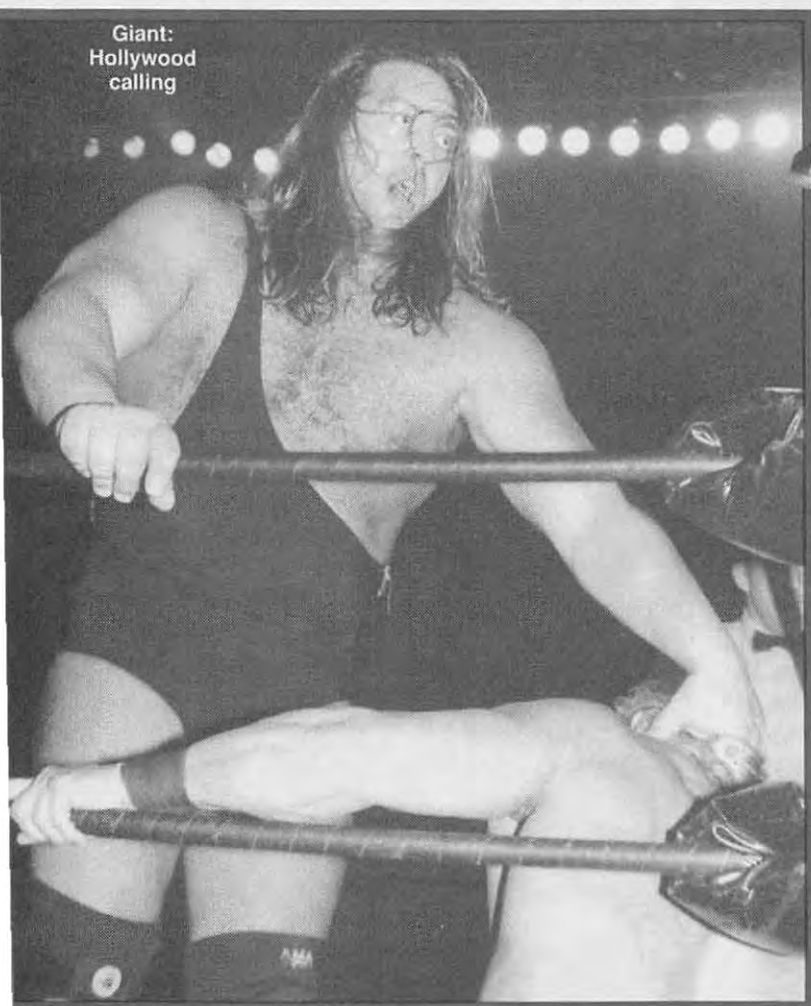
DDP: no more celebrities

DALLAS PAGE

After a successful reign as U.S. champion, Page established himself as a World title contender by securing a match with former protege Bill Goldberg at Halloween Havoc. In last year's predictions, we stated that Page would win the U.S. belt and perhaps become WCW World champion. We weren't far off the mark. This year, young competitors seeking instant reputations will try to knock Page down. Look for DDP to struggle in matches with Goldberg, then turn to U.S. champ Bret Hart as his next target. And you can forget about Page teaming with Karl Malone, Jay Leno, David Letterman, or Chi Chi Rodriguez. He's in this sport for himself now.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Gained mainstream exposure and appeared on *The Tonight Show* after forming an alliance with Jay Leno.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Attacked by NWO Hollywood prior to a match against Bret Hart for the vacant U.S. belt.



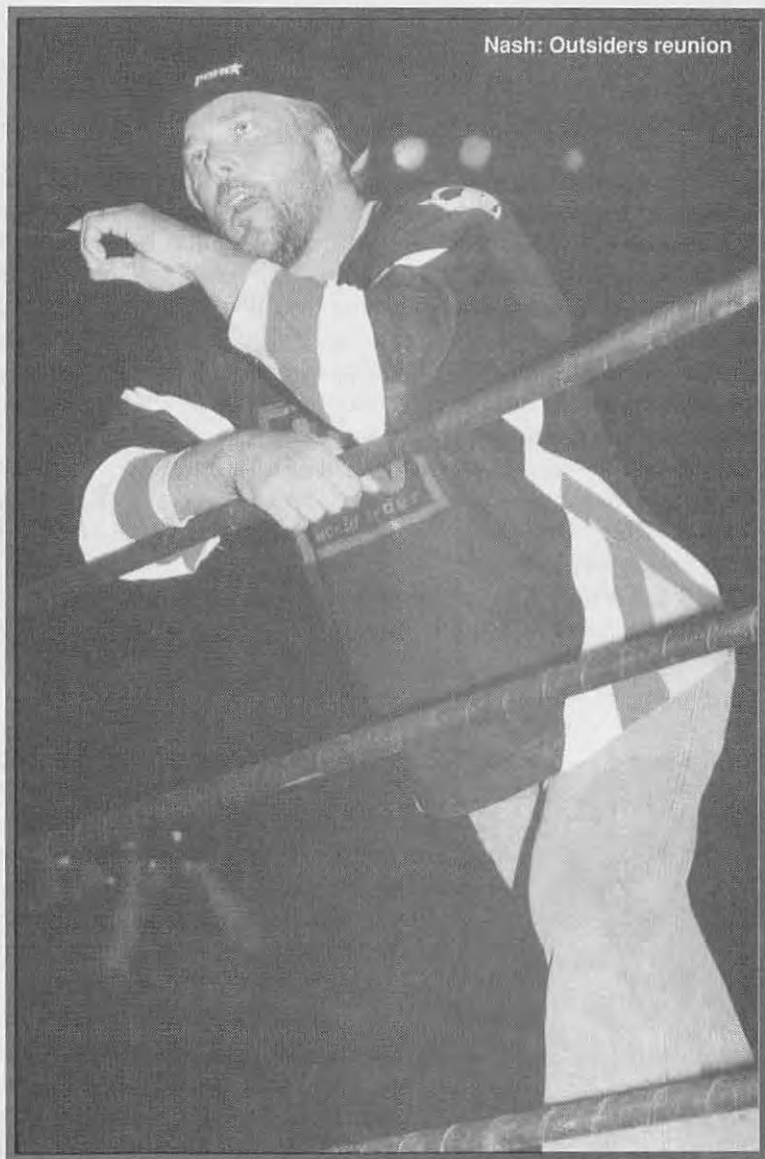
Giant:
Hollywood
calling

KEVIN NASH

For the first time since his arrival in WCW in 1996, Nash will make a serious run at the World title. While Hollywood Hogan seemed to be easy pickings for him, Bill Goldberg is another case altogether. Nevertheless, Nash will emerge as Goldberg's most serious threat in 1998. Nash will resume his friendship with Scott Hall, despite the warnings of fellow NWO Wolfpac members. Tension will mount until Nash gives in to his anti-WCW inclinations and double-crosses his teammates. If Nash fails to win the World title, as we suspect he will, he and Hall will feud with Lex Luger, Sting, and The Warrior before year's end. This time around, Nash and Hall will remain "Outsiders"—and not make the mistake of inviting others into their club.

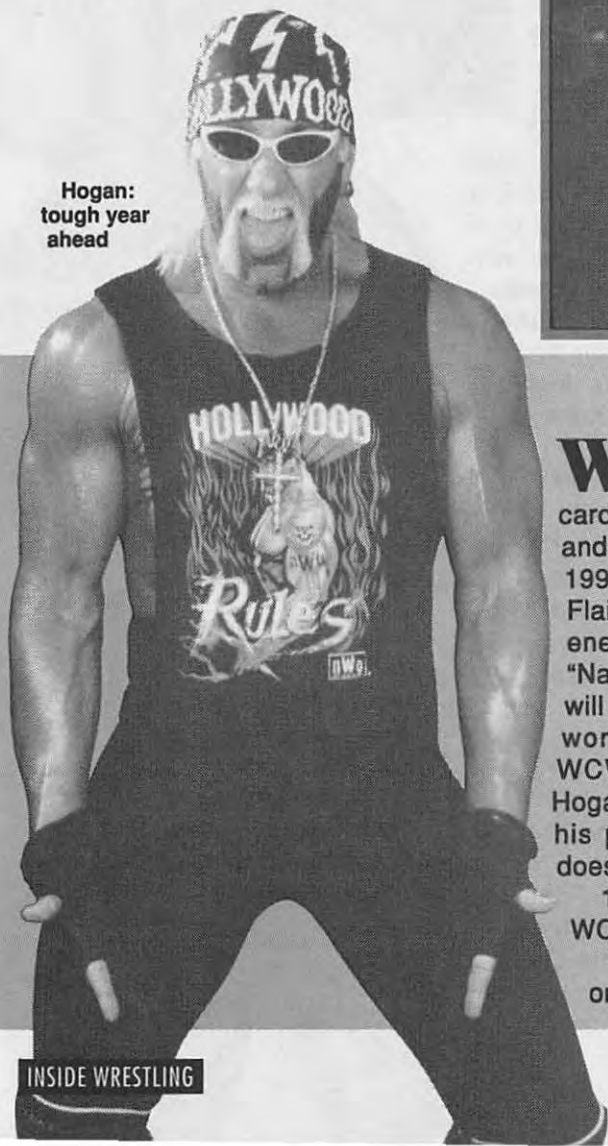
1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated arch-rival The Giant at Souled Out on January 24.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Lost the WCW World tag team title (with Sting) to Scott Hall and The Giant on July 20.



Nash: Outsiders reunion

Hogan:
tough year
ahead



HOLLYWOOD HOGAN

When Eric Bischoff runs out of ways to embarrass The Four Horsemen, he'll be forced to play his trump card and use Hollywood Hogan to humble Ric Flair once and for all. Hogan completely dominated Flair during their 1994 battles, but can Hogan repeat in 1999? It's doubtful. Flair is no longer intimidated by Hogan's mystique and is energized like never before. After being defeated by the "Nature Boy," Hogan will attempt to follow Flair's path. He will slip into semi-retirement for a few months, perhaps to work on a film, then emerge with the intent to retake WCW. This time, it won't work. Few wrestlers respect Hogan now. He could try to ask the fans' forgiveness, but his public rehabilitation could take years, which Hogan doesn't have.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Randy Savage for the WCW World title on April 20.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Lost the WCW World title to Goldberg on July 6 despite mustering his old fighting spirit.

WWF

THE UNDERTAKER

Here's the wildest prediction of the year, but it is entirely plausible: The Undertaker will emerge as the top contender to Vince McMahon's WWF World title after the federation head defeats champ Steve Austin at WrestleMania XV. Shawn Michaels, upon his return, will try to force his way into title contention at the expense of The Undertaker and Kane. 'Taker, however, will renew his 1997 feud with Michaels and defeat him in a final showdown. But Undertaker will not be successful in regaining the World title, despite being a consistent contender. Right now, too many people—including Austin, Kane, Rocky Maivia, and Mankind—have 'Taker's number.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated his half-brother, Kane, at WrestleMania XIV.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Watched tearfully as Kane and Bearer desecrated his parents' graves.

KANE

"The Big Red Machine" experienced an upsurge in popularity late in 1998. Kane, often considered a mindless follower, will prove that assumption wrong in 1999. He will drift away from *The Young And The Lifeless* soap opera, co-starring The Undertaker and Paul Bearer, and pursue a solo career. He could regain the WWF World title in 1999, or win the Intercontinental or European belts. He will become even more popular among WWF fans due to his strong and silent approach. Just don't expect Kane to unmask or start running off at the mouth.

Opponents fear Kane's mystique, not the man underneath. No one knows this better than Kane himself. He's more than brawn and brimstone; he has a brain, too.

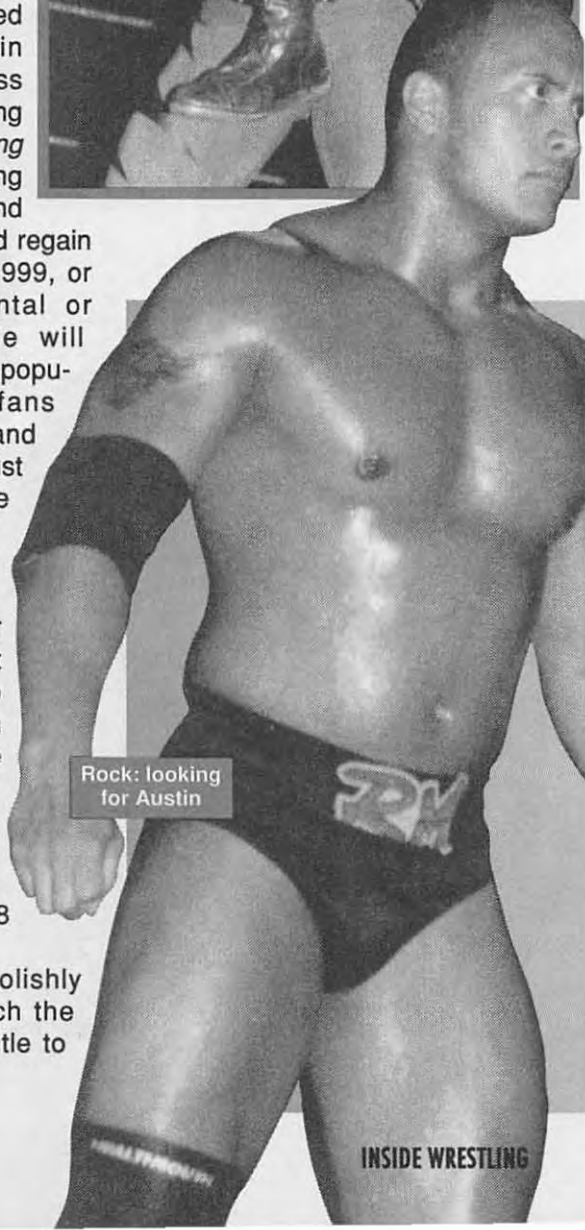
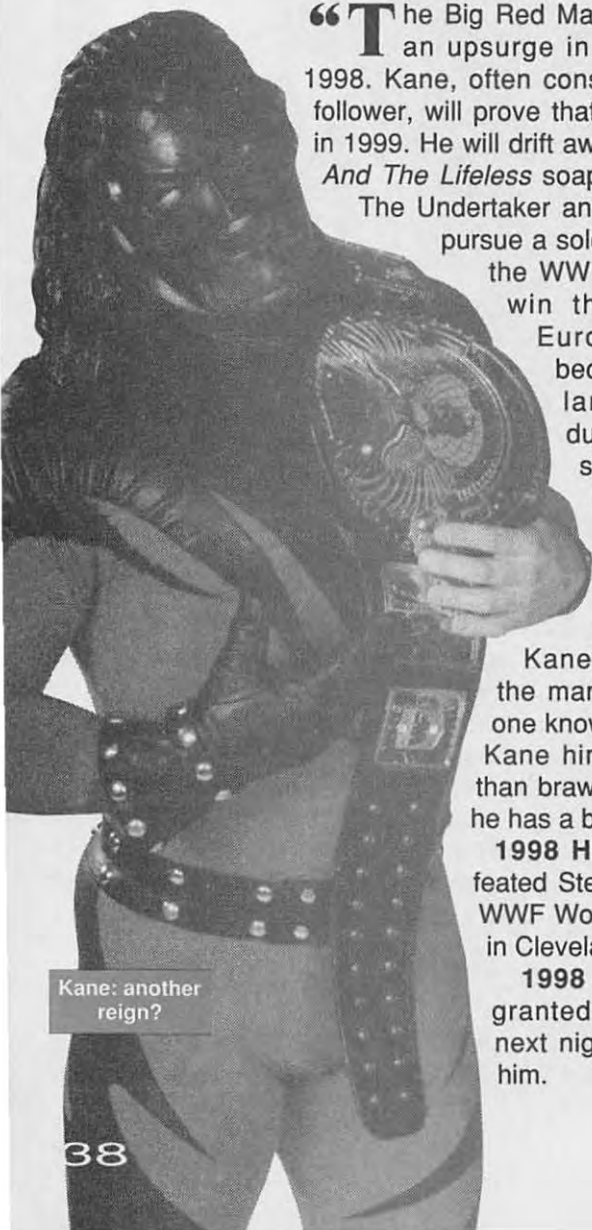
1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Steve Austin for the WWF World title on June 28 in Cleveland.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Foolishly granted Austin a rematch the next night and lost the title to him.

Kane: another reign?



Undertaker: enough with Kane



Rock: looking for Austin

STEVE AUSTIN

We'd be surprised if Austin doesn't regain the WWF World title before 1999, but if not, he will have the belt by the end of winter. Although Vince McMahon has promised no more title shots for Austin, it's hard to believe the WWF's manipulator-in-chief will be able to resist dangling the belt under Austin's nose at least one more time. Their epic feud will climax at WrestleMania XV, when the WWF owner scams his way to a victory over "Stone-Cold" for the WWF World title. Why are we so confident about this? Because McMahon cannot resist the idea of winning "his" WWF title at a milestone event like WrestleMania XV. He'll have a master plan, even if it entails a six-against-one handicap match with Austin blindfolded and handcuffed. Austin, despite the adversity ahead, will remain by far the federation's number-one draw—and McMahon's most valuable employee.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Shawn Michaels for the WWF World title at WrestleMania XIV.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Lost the World title to The Undertaker and Kane in a triple threat match on September 27 in Hamilton, Ontario.

ROCKY MAIVIA

"The Rock" will be cookin' up a banner year in 1999 and will be a serious contender to the WWF World title. He will remain second only to Steve Austin in popularity, then feud with "Stone-Cold" when their massive egos collide. By SummerSlam, we suspect they'll be battling like age-old enemies. Maivia might capture the World title before year's end, becoming one of the youngest champions ever. That would be quite an achievement for someone only three years into his career. At 6'4" and 272 pounds, Maivia has the physical tools to become the WWF's top superstar, but his main strength is his intellect. "The Rock" is never too proud to ask for help when he needs it. Since D-Lo Brown and Mark Henry refuse to be his stooges any longer, expect Maivia to look to a higher power: "The Original Rock," Rocky Johnson.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Won a triple threat cage match to become the top contender to the WWF World title on September 27.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Attacked by Brown and Henry during a tag team match in which he and Steve Austin were wrestling The Undertaker and Kane.

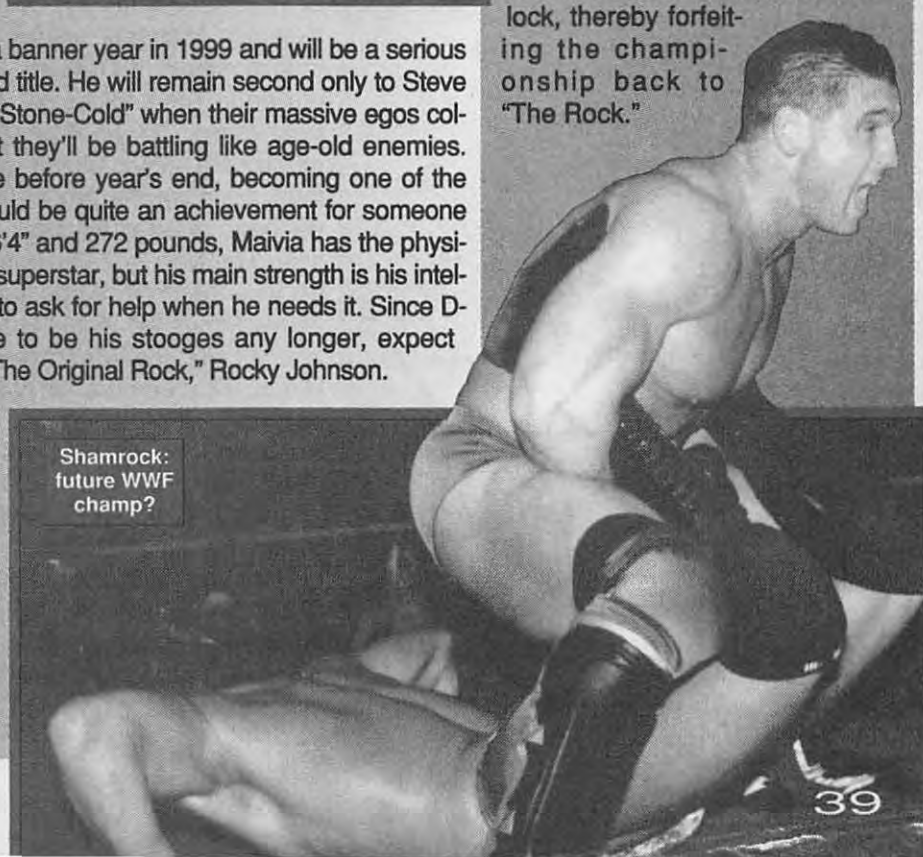
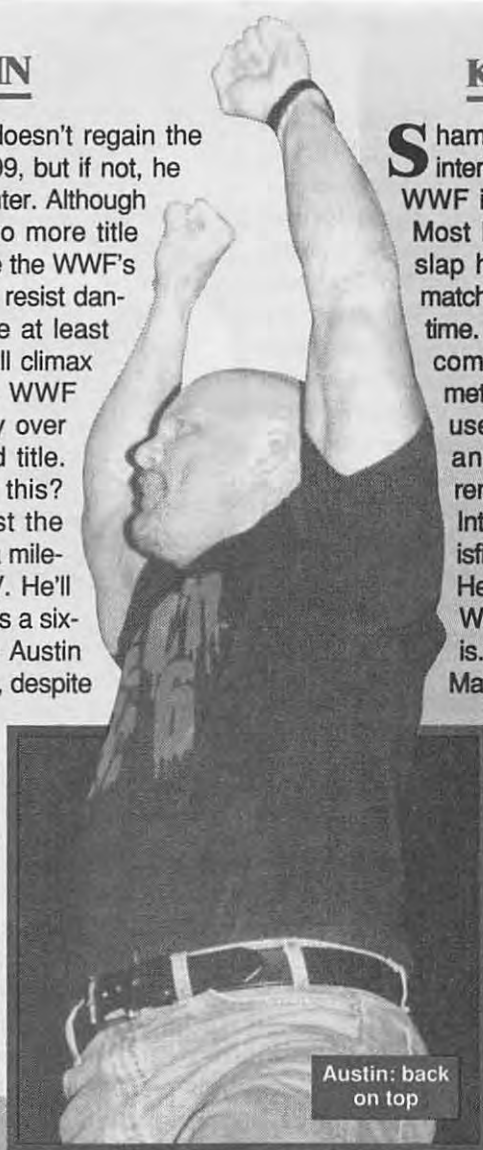
KEN SHAMROCK

Shamrock is becoming more and more intense every day, and everyone in the WWF is paying the price. "The World's Most Dangerous Man" doesn't need to slap himself into "the zone" before his matches, because he's in the zone all the time. Some say Shamrock has snapped completely. In 1999, he will reveal a method to his madness. Shamrock will use his controlled rage to intimidate and destroy his opponents while remaining savvy enough to retain the Intercontinental title. He will not be satisfied with the I-C title for long, though. He will issue another challenge for the World title, no matter who the champ is. He will reignite a feud with Rocky Maivia early this year for two reasons.

One, he will want to capitalize on "The Rock's" newfound popularity. Two, Shamrock knows he can beat him. If "The Rock" captures the World title, don't be surprised if Shamrock has it before the end of the year.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Won the Intercontinental title in a one-night tournament on October 12.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Captured the Intercontinental title at WrestleMania XIV, then refused to release Maivia from an ankle-lock, thereby forfeiting the championship back to "The Rock."



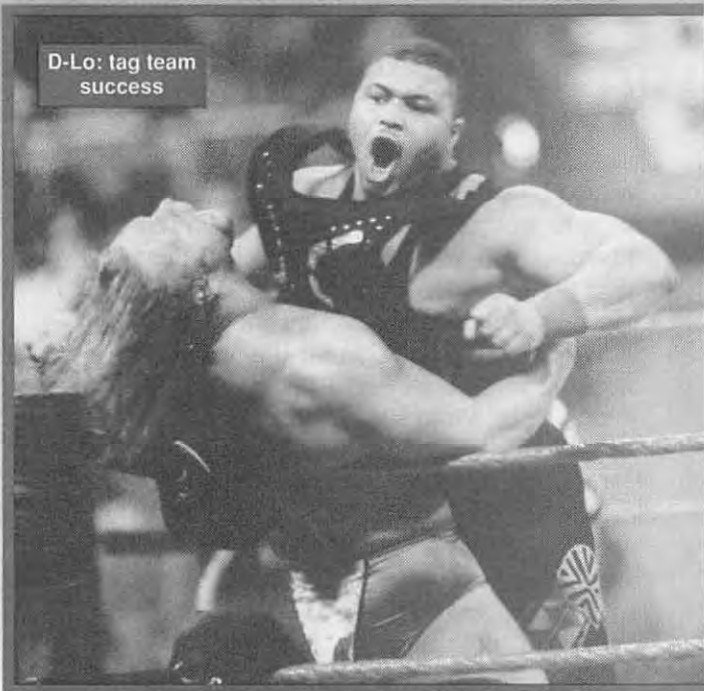
D-LO BROWN

Too bad our prognostications do not include D-Lo Brown taking a very, very extensive tour of "the continent" to defend his European title. Instead, we predict Euro-Disney will be scrapping plans for the "Lowdown Rollercoaster" after Brown loses the championship for the last time in the early-spring. Possible candidates to unseat Brown include The Godfather, Val Venis, or Edge. Brown and Mark Henry, who have been partners in crime recently, will at some point upset the self-destructing New Age Outlaws for the WWF World tag team title. Brown and Henry will be cohesive enough to hold the belts for most of the year. Always the fighting champions, they will defend the title against Too Much approximately 100 times. In a strange turn-about, they will seek guidance from Faarooq.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated established superstar Hunter Hearst Helmsley for the European title on July 14 in Binghamton, New York.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Lost the European title to X-Pac on September 15 in Sacramento, California.

D-Lo: tag team success



HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

Helmsley will be discharged from his knee rehabilitation at about the same time Shawn Michaels, following a serious back injury, returns to the WWF in January 1999. Their war will be one of the most personal and brutal in federation history. "The Heartbreak Kid" will be trying to reassert his presence and to do that, he must prove his superiority over Helmsley, who assumed Michaels' leadership position in DeGeneration X. There will be no clear winner. DX won't be much of a factor in the feud, because the group will be in disarray by that time. The New Age Outlaws will lose the WWF World tag team title, and Jesse James will blame Billy Gunn. X-Pac, sick of being the WWF's whipping boy, will blame DX members for not watching his back. DX will be no more by June 1999 at the latest, but Helmsley will pick up the pieces later in the year.

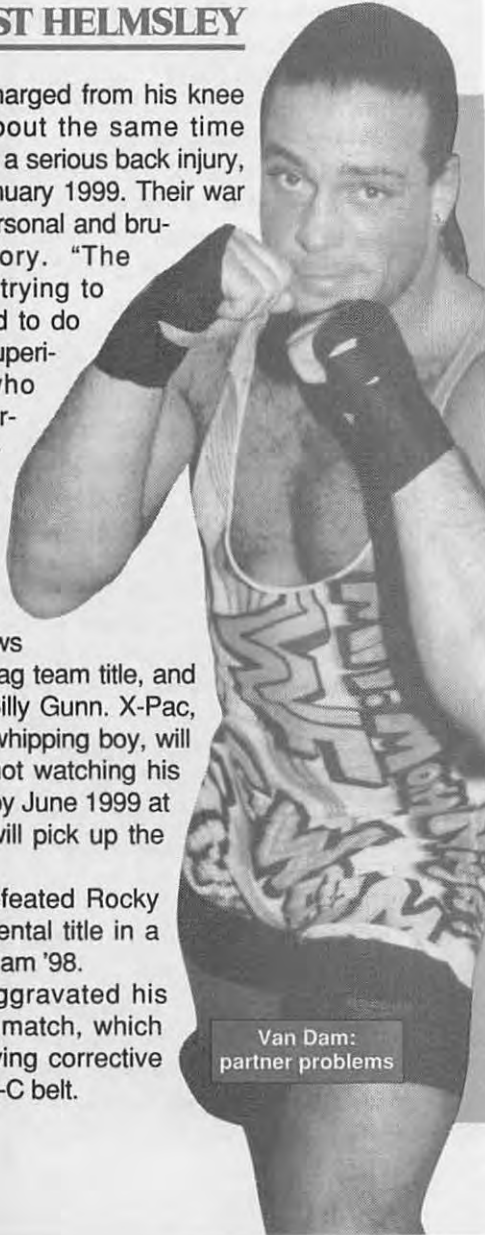
1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Rocky Maivia for the Intercontinental title in a ladder match at SummerSlam '98.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Aggravated his knee injury in the same match, which eventually led to him having corrective surgery and giving up the I-C belt.

Helmsley: war with Shawn



Van Dam: partner problems



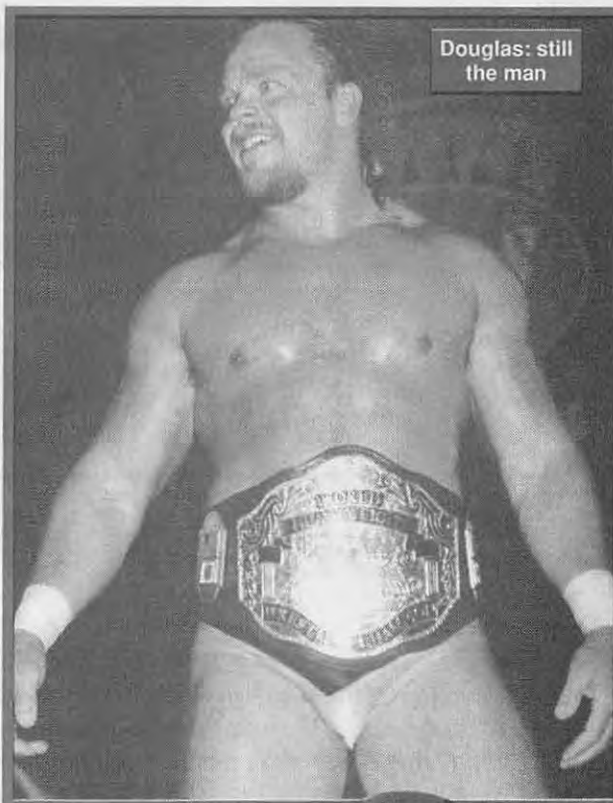
ECW

SHANE DOUGLAS

Stung by criticism for a lack of ECW title defenses in 1998, Douglas will re-double his efforts to be a respectable champion. He will still be hampered by a faulty elbow, although physical therapy and sufficient bracing will keep it in check. The Triple Threat will implode when Chris Candido, at Tammy Lynn Sytch's behest, challenges Douglas to a pay-per-view match. Bam Bam Bigelow, to avoid the conflict, will go his own way. Francine, fearing Douglas is "going soft," will latch on to Jerry Lynn. She will transform Lynn into the most hated man in ECW, preparing him for a title match against Douglas at Heatwave '99. In November 1999, Douglas will celebrate his second anniversary as champion and, in a moment unappreciated by ECW fans, thank his adoring public ... then toss the belt in a trash can.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated challenger Al Snow on May 3 despite having an injured elbow, a cracked palate, and a hairline fracture of his cheekbone.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Believed Taz wanted to join The Triple Threat on May 16 despite being attacked by him two weeks earlier at Wrestlepalooza; Douglas ended up on the receiving end of the "Taz-mission" for his folly.



Douglas: still the man

ROB VAN DAM

The reigning TV and former tag team champion, Van Dam has established himself as the future of ECW. Friction between him and Sabu in 1999 will escalate since no longer bound by championship gold and they will have a violent, bloody, and sickening feud for the TV belt. Sabu will win that title by midyear, with Bill Alfonso at his side. Instead of regaining the TV title, Van Dam will concentrate on securing a match with heavyweight champ Shane Douglas. Taz, believing that he deserves a shot, will battle Van Dam for top contender's status. Unfortunately for both men, that feud will get personal and continue throughout the year.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Defeated Bam Bam Bigelow for the ECW TV title on April 4 in Buffalo, New York.

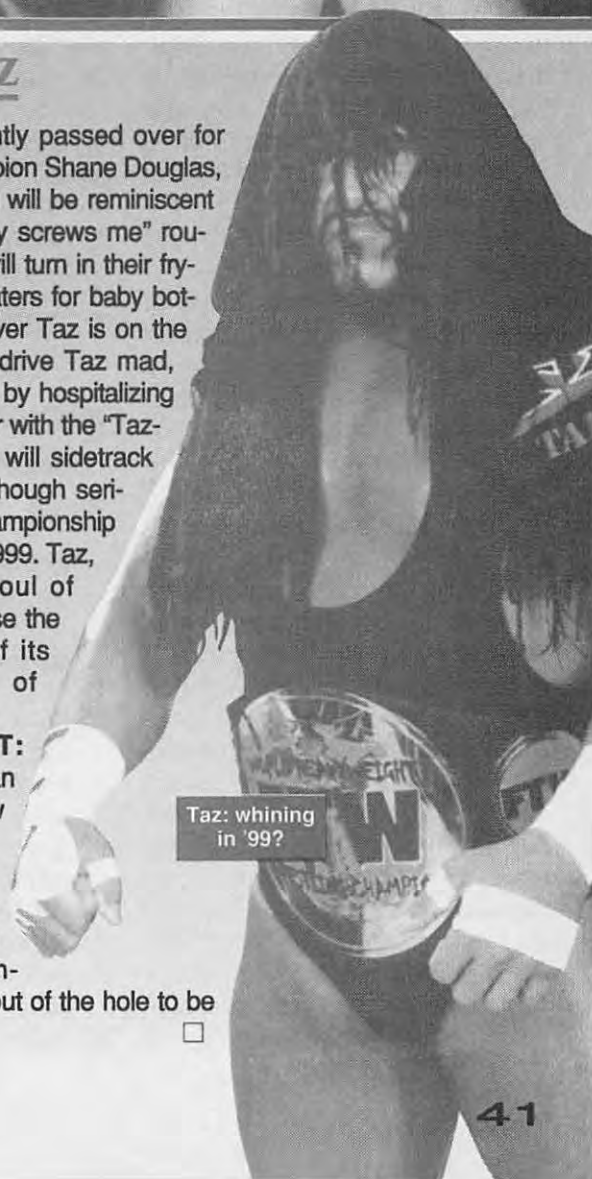
1998 LOWLIGHT: Had to wrestle his own partner, Sabu, on May 3 (the match ended in a draw).

TAZ

Taz will be consistently passed over for shots at ECW champion Shane Douglas, and his constant whining will be reminiscent of Bret Hart's "everybody screws me" routine in the WWF. Fans will turn in their frying pans and cheese graters for baby bottles and pacifiers whenever Taz is on the scene. This ridicule will drive Taz mad, and he will gain revenge by hospitalizing one wrestler after another with the "Taz-mission." These actions will sidetrack his quest for the title, although serious negotiations for a championship match will begin in late-1999. Taz, once known as the soul of ECW, will grow to despise the federation because of its alleged favoritism of Douglas.

1998 HIGHLIGHT: Joined Sabu and Rob Van Dam in ECW's New Triple Threat.

1998 LOWLIGHT: Was driven through the canvas by Bam Bam Bigelow at Living Dangerously, then dragged out of the hole to be pinned for the TV title. □



Taz: whining in '99?

HOTSEAT

KEN SHAMROCK

"THIS IS WHAT YOU WANTED ME TO BE!"

WHEN KEN SHAMROCK entered the WWF after a successful run in the UFC, many ring observers predicted it wouldn't be long before gold found its way to his waist. Instead, it took more than 18 months, a vacated Intercontinental title, and a stunning attitude change before Shamrock finally garnered his first belt in the federation.

When Hunter Hearst Helmsley proved unable to defend the I-C belt he won from Rocky Maivia at SummerSlam, Shamrock knew he had to seize the opportunity before him. Increasingly frustrated by his lack of success in three-way matches with Maivia and Mankind (despite his one-on-one dominance of both men), Shamrock channeled his explosive aggression into a championship performance during the eight-man title tournament on October 12.

Shamrock started the night off with an attack on former ally Steve Blackman, focusing on Blackman's injured knee. The match seesawed in Blackman's favor, but Shamrock demonstrated his resiliency by grabbing Blackman's leg while he was flat on the mat and rolling the martial artist into his anklelock. Next, Shamrock capitalized on Val Venis' preoccupation with Goldust and took a

submission win over him.

An injured X-Pac gave a hearty effort against Shamrock in the tourney finals, but Shamrock was not to be denied. An anklelock later, the WWF crowned a new I-C champion.

Now that Shamrock is finally a titleholder, *INSIDE WRESTLING* sent Senior Writer Dan Murphy to meet with him and find out what one of the most hated men in the WWF is looking to achieve.

"I've found the secret of succeeding in the WWF: Just do whatever the hell you feel like doing... Screw the fans and the announcers. I didn't come to the WWF to be popular."

Q: Well, Ken, I guess I should start out by congratulating you on winning the WWF Intercontinental title. I suppose it's appropriate that you won the belt in a tournament, considering how well you fared in UFC and amateur tournaments, as well as this year's King of the Ring.

A: I guess I've got a soft spot in

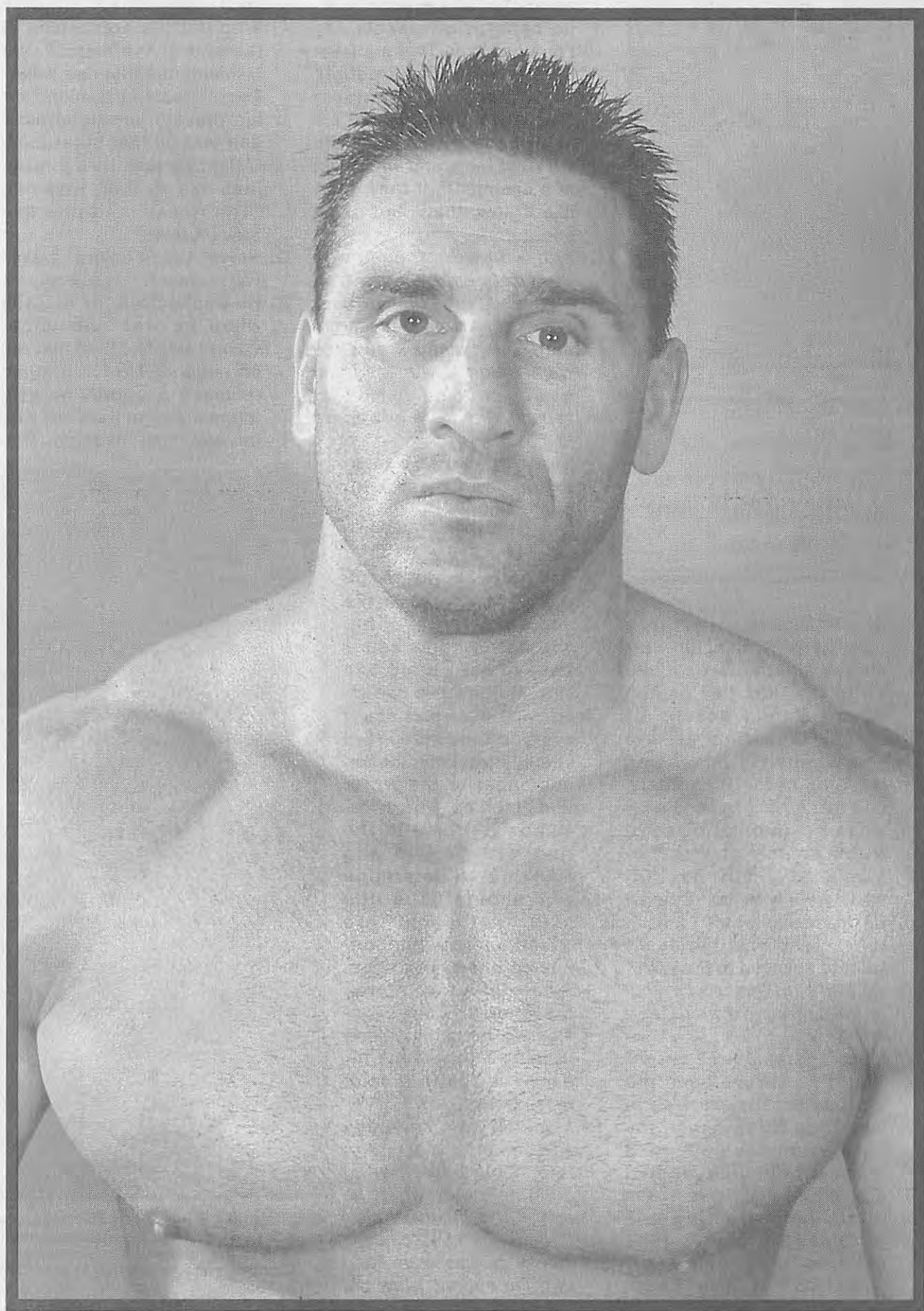
my heart for tournaments. They're a good way to show you how soft and weak a lot of these other so-called superstars are.

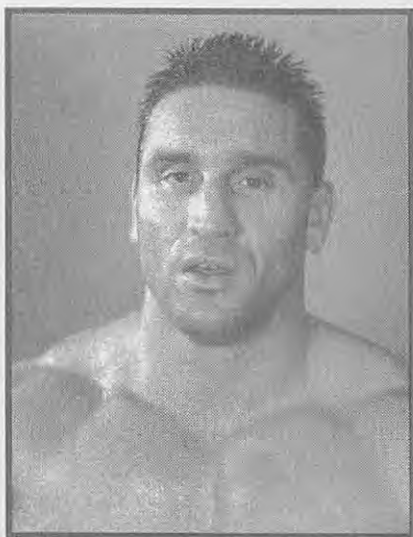
Q: What exactly do you mean by that?

A: X-Pac's a prime example of what I'm talking about. He took a little bit of a beating by Jeff Jarrett and Mankind, and he's rolling around crying on the mat. That's pitiful. And then I hear the announcers during that match. They were acting like X-Pac was doing something brave just by being out there. He was doing his job! If he's not man enough to do it, then maybe he should find a new line of work.

Q: It surprises me that you would say that, Ken. You were always the kind of athlete who valued guts and determination. X-Pac came up short, but he gave you a tough fight before you were able to put him away. He was injured going into that match.

A: I value victory. That's it. You know, once upon a time I cared about those kind of attributes. I cared about honor and all that other garbage. I beat Bret Hart and





"I'm still going to make my opponents cry for mercy. I'm just not going to give it to them now."

Shawn Michaels when they held the WWF title, but they always found a way to hold on to the title. I've beaten Rocky Maivia dozens of times, including at last year's Survivor Series and the King of the Ring finals, and that's not even counting when I made that piece of trash submit at WrestleMania XIV, but he still walked out with the I-C belt. I finally realized that I'd have to reassess what I value if I want to succeed in the WWF.

Q: *So that's the reason for your more aggressive attitude of late?*

A: More aggressive? I resent that. I've always been the most aggressive machine in wrestling. In the past, my aggression has gotten me disqualified, like when I started suplexing referees after that WrestleMania debacle. And all the fans cheered their heads off when I did that. Then I decid-

ed to choose my spots a little better. Now people say I'm a bad guy. That's a joke. This is what those people want. They like maniacs. This is what you wanted me to be, people! The fans made me what I am, and what I am is a champion. If they don't like it now, that's too damn bad.

Q: *Ken, you were friends with Blackman, but after you beat him, you kept him in your anklelock, risking disqualification. This wasn't a guy you were feuding with, and you nearly crippled him. That sounds a lot more aggressive to me.*

A: I sent Blackman a message: Don't mess with Shamrock.

Q: *I thought that was "Don't Mess With Texas."*

A: Are you trying to be funny? If you know the sport you're covering, you better know better than to get on my bad side, Murphy. I've collected wins over just about everyone in the WWF. I should have been the top contender to the World title. Instead, Vince McMahon puts me in the ring with Maivia and Mankind to determine who should get a title shot. I thought pro wrestling was all about one-on-one competition. What does that match prove about Maivia, considering he had Mankind running interference for him? I've beaten both of those freaks.

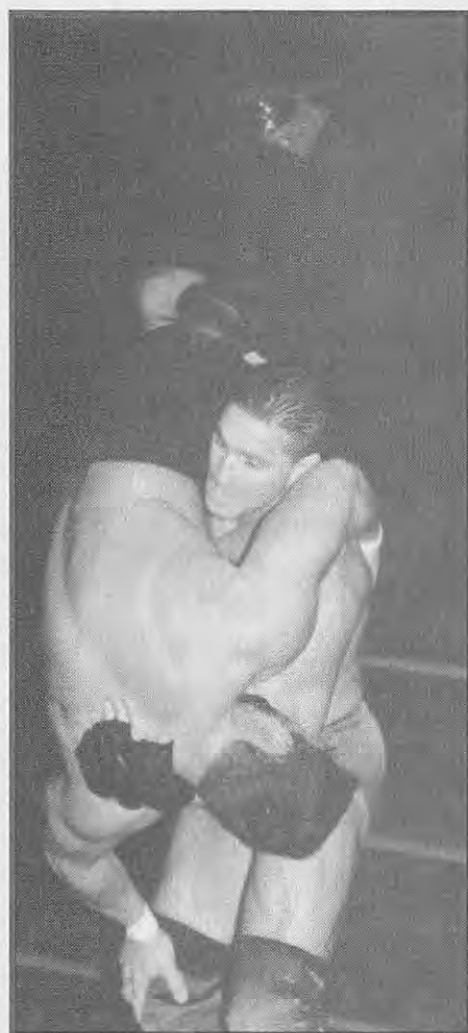
Q: *Mankind has made you something of a target of late. You beat him at Judgment Day when he applied his mandible claw to himself so you couldn't get the satisfaction of hearing him submit. How did*

you feel about that?

A: Who got his arm raised at the end of the match? Not Mankind. It's just like X-Pac. People praised Mankind for his bravery and determination and all that other crap. Listen: He lost. He's a loser, just like X-Pac, just like "The Rock," and just like Steve Austin.

Q: *Steve Austin? What makes you put him in that category?*

A: He ducked me for months when he was champion. When I finally called him out on national TV, forcing him to make a stand, he still found a way to walk out with the belt. That match on *Raw*



Ken Shamrock slams Steve Blackman, his foe in the first round of the I-C title tourney. Before long, this former UFC star claims, he'll be slamming stars in defense of the WWF World title.



Making Val Venis cry for mercy pleases Shamrock; giving mercy, however, is no longer in his repertoire.

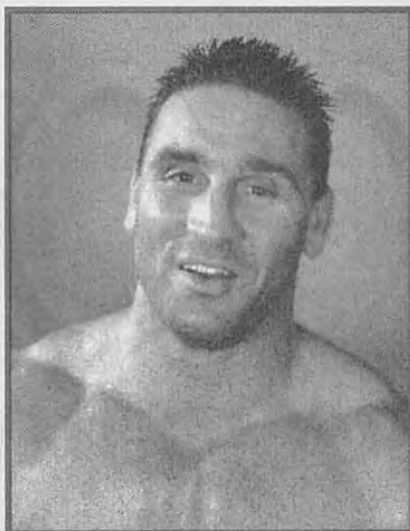
ended in a disqualification, but did you ever see Austin come out and offer me another shot? No, but then after he loses the belt, McMahon makes him wrestle me in an "I Quit" match. I had him right where I wanted him, and then Mankind hits me with a chair and knocks me out cold. People treat those two like heroes. That sickens me. I can't wait to see McMahon finally take

care of that redneck.

Q: *You've admitted that your temper has cost you matches in the past, but it seems to me like you're not even trying to control that temper anymore. Now that you're a champion, are you going to be able to adapt your approach to your matches accordingly? After all, now your opponents have to either pin you or make you submit, whereas you can keep the belt by countout or disqualification. Are you concerned your opponents can rile you up and force you to make a mistake that can cost you the title?*

A: I'm not the kind of man who's going to use my belt as a shield. Just because a bunch of ignorant fans have started to boo me doesn't mean Ken Shamrock is a different man. I'm still going to stay on the offensive at all times. I'm still going to make my opponents cry for mercy. I'm just not going to give it to them now.

Q: *Are there any wrestlers out there who you think*



"Ken Shamrock's going to take whatever he wants, whenever he wants, regardless of what everyone else wants. The Ken Shamrock era has begun!"

may be able to give you a real challenge?

A: Honestly, no. I've found the secret of succeeding in the WWF: Just do whatever the hell you feel like doing. If I feel like snapping tendons, I'll do it. If I feel like swinging a chair, I'll do it. Screw the fans and the announcers. I didn't come to the WWF to be popular. I came to be recognized as the world's most dangerous man. And I think I'm on my way.

Q: *Maybe you're on your way, but you're still not the WWF World champion.*

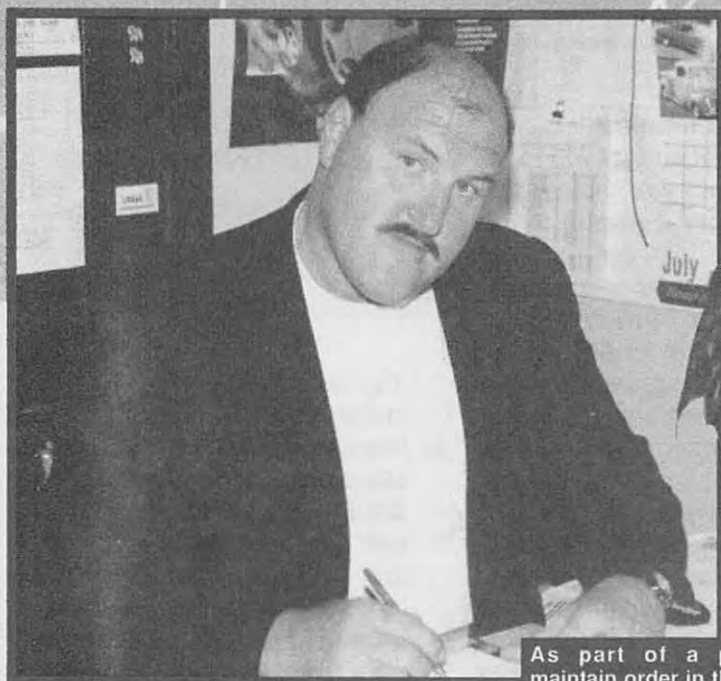
A: Oh, I promise you that will change. Who's going to stand in my way? Ken Shamrock's going to take whatever he wants, whenever he wants, regardless of what everyone else wants. The Ken Shamrock era has begun! □



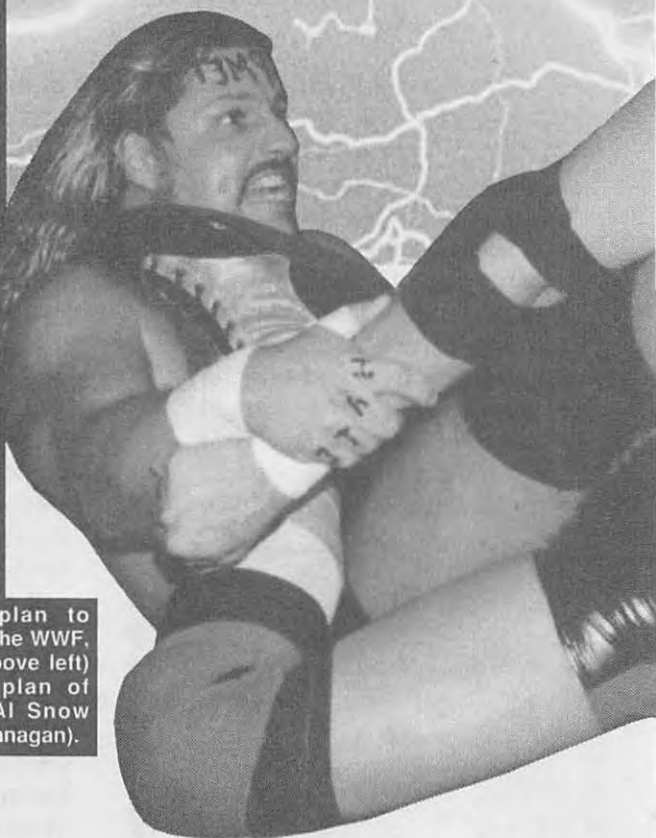
Shamrock says that X-Pac is "pitiful" because he doesn't just buckle down and wrestle instead of constantly complaining about his injuries all the time.

GONE IN

SLAUGHTER'S EVIL SCHEME TO REMOVE AL SNOW



As part of a plan to maintain order in the WWF, Sgt. Slaughter (above left) implemented a plan of attack against Al Snow (right, vs. Flash Flanagan).



For the past six months,
Al Snow has been
determined to make a
name for himself in the
WWF. For the past six
months, the WWF has
resisted his efforts ...
and now it's
playing dirty

By Dave Rosenbaum

WITH HIS GIANT hands, Sgt. Slaughter crumpled the latest issue of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly* into a ball and threw it across the room. His opinion about the contents of that issue were no longer in doubt.

"This is garbage, gentlemen," Slaughter said angrily. "I always

thought your publication held wrestlers and the people within the sport to a higher standard."

Slaughter got up from his swivel chair, walked across the room, picked up the crumpled ball of *PWI Weekly*, and read again.

"Al Snow? Seventh in the WWF ratings? According to who?" Slaughter demanded. "According to the latest official WWF ratings,

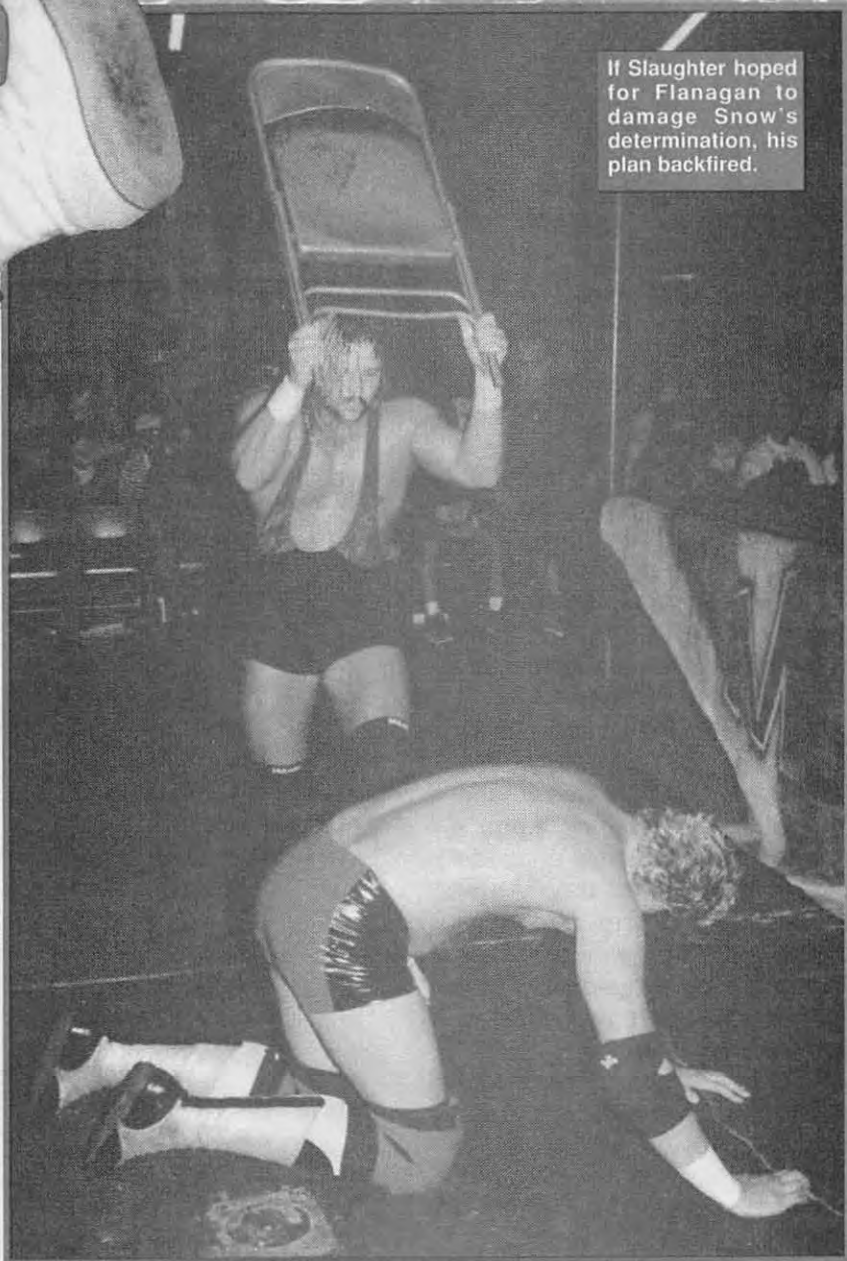
A FLASH

Photos by Steve Bryant & Steve Argintaru



which I have right here, Al Snow isn't even in the top 20."

Slaughter opened a desk drawer, from which he pulled out a sheet of paper and placed it on the table. It was a memo from Vince McMahon to all high-ranking WWF employees. Re: top 20 contenders to the WWF World heavyweight title. Al Snow was nowhere to be found on the list.



If Slaughter hoped for Flanagan to damage Snow's determination, his plan backfired.



From the top of a staircase (left) to the back of the arena (below right), Flanagan and Snow battled furiously. Flanagan never wrestle harder—and he did so because Slaughter was using him as a weapon against Snow.

"These aren't your ratings," Senior Editor Bill Apter stammered. "These are our ratings, and they're considered official by major wrestling organizations around the world, not to mention wrestling fans worldwide."

"Well," Slaughter said, "not by ours."

Slaughter's anger was understandable, considering Apter's reason for requesting an audience with him that day. Apter wanted Slaughter to confirm or deny a story that would accuse him of playing a major role in a conspiracy to remove Al Snow from the federation.

Slaughter's reply: "That's rubbish. And if you think it's the truth, you'd better be able to prove it."

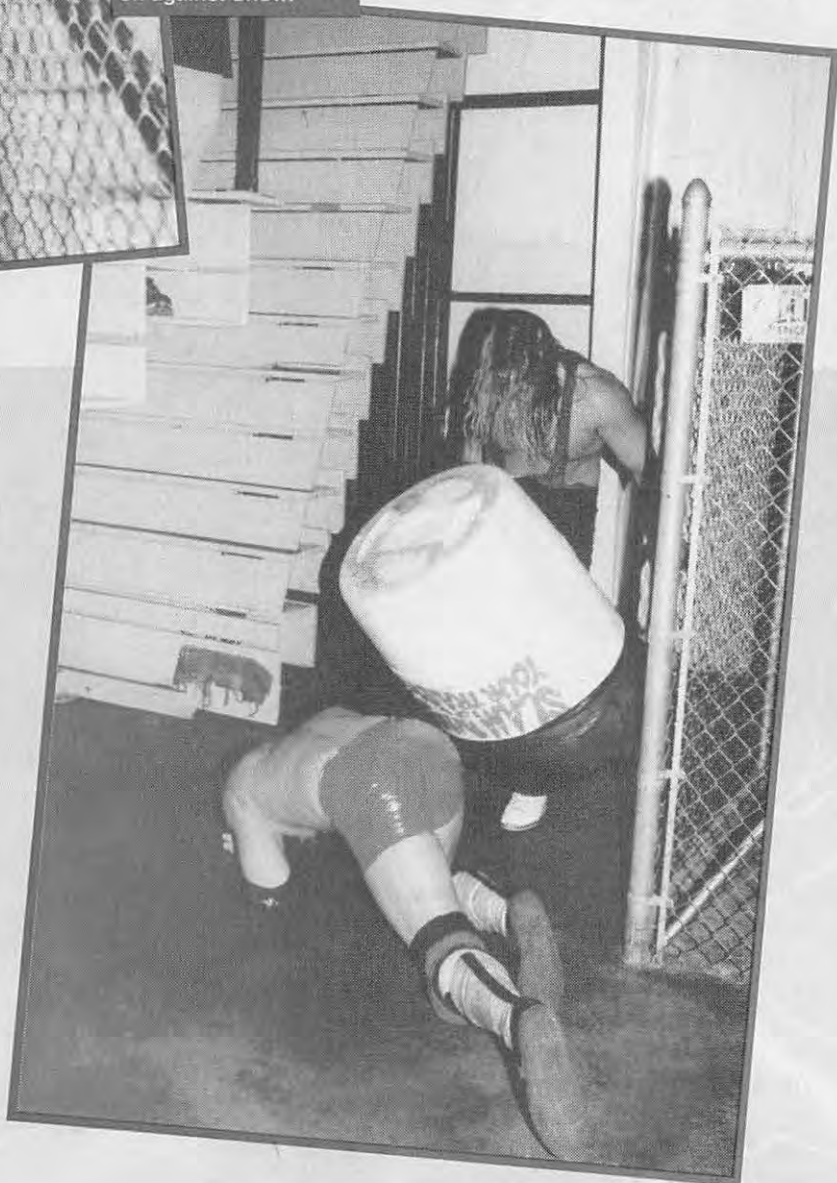
INSIDE WRESTLING has the proof, thanks to several high-ranking

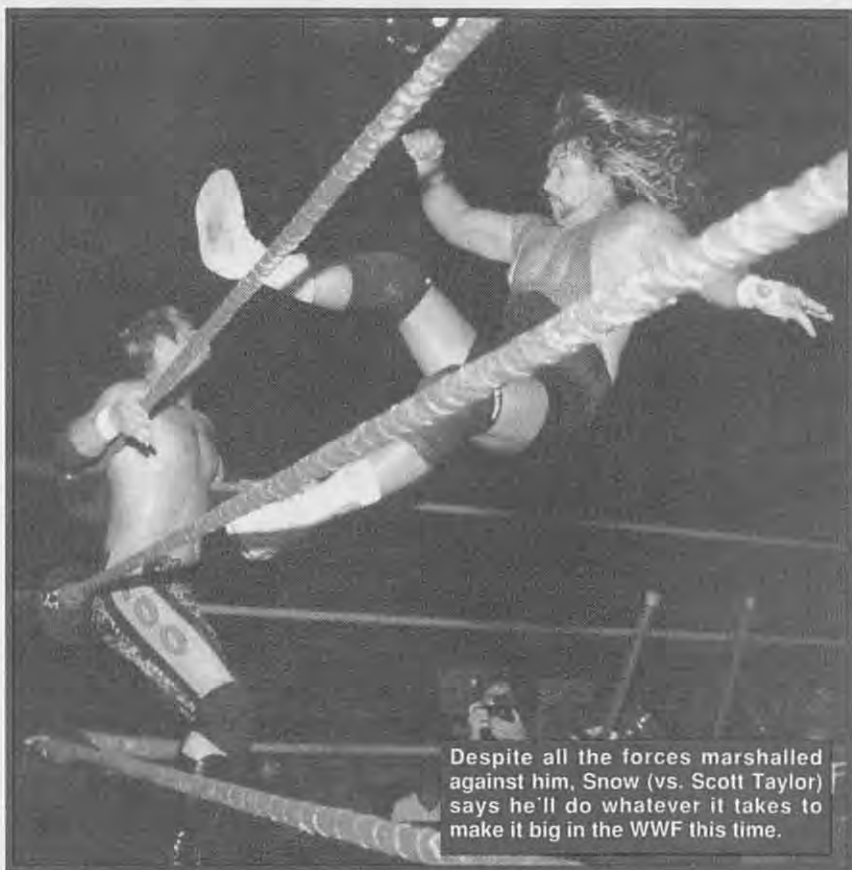
sources within the WWF, a few of whom work closely with Slaughter.

We learned that on October 3, at a Music City Wrestling card in Nashville, Tennessee, Flash Flanagan was enlisted by Slaughter to do whatever he could to destroy Snow. Slaughter's plan failed. The Tennessee Volz—Steven Dunn and Reno Riggins—attacked Snow 20 minutes into the match, but Flanagan assisted Snow, who won by disqualification.

But Snow's recent history brings up an intriguing question: How far did the WWF go to ensure that Snow would never get his break?

"I don't know the answer to that





Despite all the forces marshalled against him, Snow (vs. Scott Taylor) says he'll do whatever it takes to make it big in the WWF this time.

question," Snow said. "But it always seemed to me like there was some kind of conspiracy going on, like everybody in the world was out to get us. I know for a fact we've had to work harder than anybody else for everything we've got."

Snow deserves high marks for perseverance. A few years after wrestling in the WWF as both Avatar and Leif Cassidy, Snow—along with his mannequin head named Head (hence the "we" in the above paragraph)—returned to the WWF last spring and requested a meeting with McMahon. He was rebuffed at every turn. Usually, Snow would end up getting chased away by security guards. He never got his meeting with the big boss.

Even one of Snow's friends, Jerry Lawler, turned against him. Lawler eventually declared that if Snow and Head could beat Brian Christopher and Scott Taylor at King of the Ring (with Lawler serving as guest referee), he'd

get Snow a meeting with McMahon. If Snow lost, he'd have to leave the federation. Snow lost and eventually made his way to Music City Wrestling.

"You see, that just shows what a moron he is," Lawler said. "He wrestles in a tag team match and takes this, this ... Head as his partner. No wonder he's such a loser!"

Perhaps, but Snow was a determined loser. A few months later, he again started showing up in the WWF and having confrontations with McMahon's cronies Pat Patterson, Gerald Brisco, and Slaughter. Again, Snow got nowhere ... until Slaughter finally challenged Snow to a boot camp match. If Snow won, he'd be reinstated. If he lost, he'd have to leave the federation forever.

This time, Snow won ... after hitting Sarge with Head.

"He got lucky," Slaughter insisted.

But from that point on, Slaughter wasn't going to leave anything to chance. He and the WWF had

been humiliated by Snow, and he was intent on destroying him. When Slaughter found out that Snow was going to wrestle Flanagan at the Music City Wrestling card in Nashville, he immediately got on the phone and called Flanagan, who had participated in the WWF's light heavyweight title tournament in the fall of 1997.

"Slaughter told Flanagan to do whatever he could to destroy Snow," said a WWF employee who overheard the phone conversation. "He told Snow that if he won, he'd make sure he got his break in the WWF. He'd take care of him. Money, matches, whatever. Then a few minutes later, he called Flanagan again. I heard him say, 'Just to make sure we got this straight, you do your job against Snow, and I'll do my job to make sure you get noticed.'"

Many people involved with Music City Wrestling said they had never seen Flanagan train so hard. The match was one of Flanagan's best. He gave one of the greatest efforts of his career, battling Snow inside and outside of the ring for more than 20 minutes. Snow struck Flanagan with a garbage can. They wrestled through the crowd and to the back of the building. Finally, with both men on the verge of exhaustion, The Tennessee Volz interfered.

And there it was: proof that even a man as powerful as Sgt. Slaughter can't control everything. Earlier in the card, Snow had interfered in the Volz' match against Robert Gibson. Interfering was their way of getting revenge. And then Flanagan decided Snow wasn't such a bad guy after all. Slaughter's plans for revenge were ruined.

For now. Again, Slaughter threw his *PWI Weekly* to the floor. Then he picked it up and tore it into pieces.

"He's messing with the wrong man," Slaughter warned. "The wrong man." □

The telephone wires sizzle each month, as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. Here's the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to feel the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ... One On One

TO SAY BILL GOLDBERG and Chris Jericho are very different types of wrestlers wouldn't do justice to the word "understatement." Everything from their ring styles to their hairstyles stand drastically opposed.

With such vastly different personalities, a clash between the two was inevitable. Perhaps it was also inevitable that it would be Jericho who would instigate that clash by antagonizing Goldberg.

First it was the chubby Goldberg impostor whom Jericho trounced at Fall Brawl. Then it was Jericho's subsequent taunting of the reigning WCW World heavyweight champion. Finally, it was Jericho's reluctance to face the real Goldberg in the ring.

Despite Jericho's win over the impostor Goldberg, he doesn't seem anywhere near a World title shot. Nevertheless, the taunts have propelled Jericho onto the World champion's radar screen.

Goldberg is not usually the type to get involved with mind games and trash-talking, but Jericho has found a way to annoy him, just as he did with Dean Malenko. Is Jericho making a grave mistake by angering Goldberg? Or will the WCW TV champion's antics frustrate the usually level-headed Goldberg and force him to enter into a feud that could result in the first loss of his career?

Surprisingly, it was Goldberg who requested a chance to confront Jericho over the telephone, not the other way around. It didn't take much convincing to get Jericho to agree to go "One On One" with the WCW World champ.

ONE O



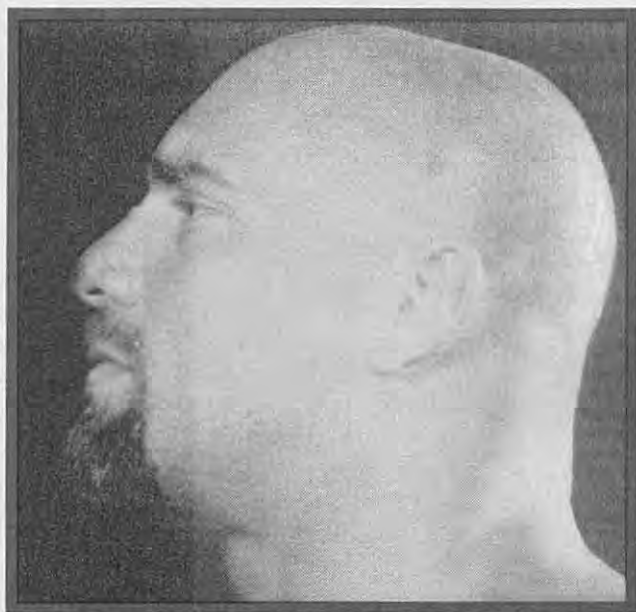
**"You know what I hate about you, Greenberg? You're all show. You never had paid your dues like I did ... So you're undefeated. Big deal."
—Chris Jericho**

CHRIS JERICO: Ladies and gentlemen, readers of INSIDE WRESTLING around the world, you are witnesses to history! Goldberg's unmatched streak of seven consecutive phone calls without a wrong number jumps to eight. 8-0! 8-0! Who's next? Will Goldberg call for a pizza? Or will his next call to the Hair Club for Men go horribly awry and humble the savior of WCW? Stay tuned to *As The Cueball Turns ...*

BILL GOLDBERG: I'm just surprised you were man enough to pick up the phone when you knew it would be me calling. I kind of figured you'd be hiding under the bed or primping your hair or something. But hey, I've got to give you credit for agreeing to talk to me here. Now if we could just find a way to keep you in the ring for a match.

CJ: You know, what is it with everyone insulting my manliness? I'm starting to take offense with that. A while back, I talked to my good friend Rey Misterio Jr. in a "One On One," and he had the nerve to come right out and say that he thought I was a coward. Then Jo-Jo Dillon called me a coward, too. I mean, Jo-Jo Dillon? Now you're implying I'm not "manly" enough to talk to you on the phone. Do you guys have the same speech-writers? It's funny, because

N ONE



"In front of the fans and in print, I'm saying I'm going to put you down and hard. It won't take long, either. When it happens is entirely up to you."
—Bill Goldberg

Misterio is an ex-champion today, and Jo-Jo is pushing a pencil in a tiny office in Atlanta. Call it the **INSIDE WRESTLING** "One On One" with Chris Jericho curse. Who's next, eh, Billy? Could be you, big guy.

BG: I hope you know by now that I'm not the kind of guy who's intimidated easily, unlike you. What exactly are you after, punk? You call me out. You put me down. You make fun of me and get a good laugh out of it. You try to get my attention. Well, you got my attention. I'm ready for you. Now you're running away from me.

CJ: Well of course I ran away! What else did you expect me to do? You came out to the ring carrying some guy on your back—someone who looked just like you. What am I going to do, let you and your twin brother attack me? That wouldn't have been fair at all, and you know I like to do everything according to the rules.

BG: My twin brother?

CJ: Either that or you paid some guy to get a facelift. Or maybe you were cloned. It doesn't matter, anyway, because you came out with a teammate, defying every regulation in the WCW handbook. I won't stand for that. And then you stormed the ring and didn't allow the referee to check your

boots, trunks, or fingernails. You could have filed those nails into claws for all I know.

BG: Like I said, you got my attention. You want to step in the ring, or do you want to forget this whole thing ever happened and go back to defending your, what is it—cruiserweight belt?

CJ: I am the reigning television champion of the world, buddy! Get your facts straight.

BG: Whatever. I've got other things to worry about.

CJ: Oh, yeah? Your long-running feud with Jerry Flynn, for instance. You really took a chance by putting your belt on the line against him. And your ducking of real challengers must keep you busy, too.

BG: You listen to this and take it to heart, Jericho. I am proud to be the WCW World champion. I count it among the greatest accomplishments of my life, and I think I represent WCW as well as anyone ever has. I'm not going to stand for someone like you trying to cheapen what I've managed to accomplish. I lobbied the Executive Committee to give me a match against you on *Nitro*, but you high-tailed it out of the arena the first chance you got. You had your shot, fun boy.

CJ: Fun boy? Well, at least your speech-writer came up with something I haven't heard before. Now if they could teach you a few more moves. I forget more moves in an average day than you have. I mean, fireworks, smoke-breathing, spear, "jackhammer." Exciting.

BG: At least you've done your homework. You know how much that knock gets to me. You want to see some new moves? Get in the ring and I'll show you some. Believe me, I know other ways to put a man down for the count. I just haven't had to use them yet. Be glad.

CJ: You know what I hate about you, Greenberg? You're all show. You never paid your dues like I did. You became friends with "Diamond" Dallas Page and had some doors opened for you because of the way you look. So you're undefeated. Big deal. Most of those wins came over scrubs like Flynn and Chavo Guerrero.

BG: And what about the wins over Hogan, Sting, and The Giant? Have you beaten those guys?

CJ: Lucky. No one had time to scout you out properly. Of course, I have.

BG: So what have you learned? What's the chink in Goldberg's armor?

CJ: It's not hard to see for a true student of the game such as myself. Despite all your hype, despite everything Tony Schiavone and Mike Tenay say, you are beatable. Very beatable, in fact. Page had to save you against The Giant a few weeks ago on *Nitro*. Sting took you to the limit. And I'm sure you're still thanking your lucky stars Kevin Nash got sidetracked into a feud with Scott Hall. You can be defeated, and Chris Jericho is the man to do it.

BG: But first you've got to get up the guts to actually wrestle me. I know you're all talk, Jericho, and now it's time for me to call you out. In front of the fans and in print, I'm saying I'm going to put you down and hard. It won't take long, either. When it happens is entirely up to you. □

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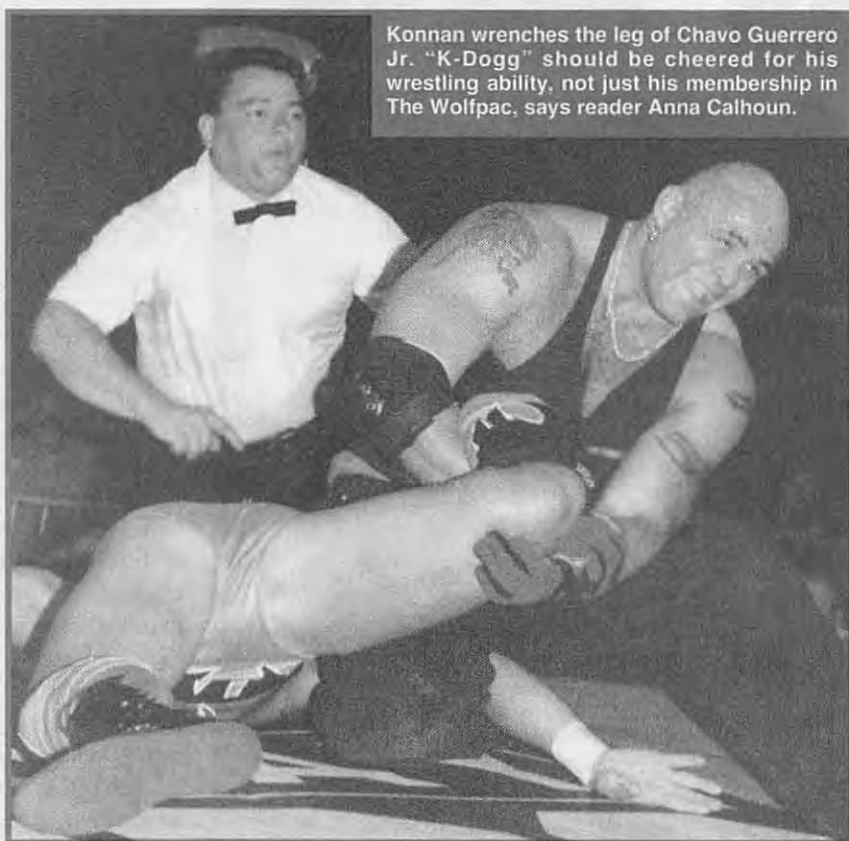
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Sincerely Yours

(Continued from page 5)



Konnan wrenches the leg of Chavo Guerrero Jr. "K-Dogg" should be cheered for his wrestling ability, not just his membership in The Wolfpac, says reader Anna Calhoun.

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BOWDY! BOWDY!

One of WCW's greatest wrestlers is Konnan of NWO Wolfpac. But "K-Dogg" doesn't get enough attention for his wrestling ability. His fans love The Wolfpac and love "K-Dogg," but they don't love "K-Dogg" just because he's in the Wolfpac. They love him because he's himself. He doesn't hide behind the other members of the red and black. He just goes out there and acts like himself, which is commendable.

When Konnan gets attention in the magazines, it's usually because of his association with the Wolfpac, but we think he deserves attention for his individual ability.

ANNA CALHOUN
Jay, FL

TALL TALE OF THE TAPE

Marc Mero's "Tale Of The Tape" (December 1998) was completely

one-sided and unfair. Mero is an idiot if he thinks Jacquelyn is a better woman than Sable. Wrestling fans need not look any further than the opening pages of that article to see the difference between Sable and Jackie.

Sable is the classiest and most beautiful woman in the WWF, and she certainly doesn't need Marc Mero's support for all of her fans to realize that. Look how Mero's career has gone down the toilet since he got rid of Sable. All he does is lose matches, especially the ones where he teams up with his ugly little sidekick. Marc Mero's opinions mean nothing to me. He is a biased, know-nothing fool who wouldn't recognize a classy lady if she power-bombed him.

RICH MOORE
Atlantic City, NJ □

This Month In...

THE Wrestler

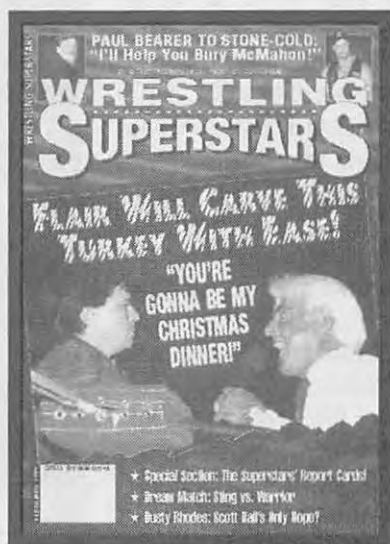


What's with **KEN SHAMROCK** and **ROCKY MAIVIA**? Why are both of them so angry? Shamrock's anger has made him one of the WWF's most hated men, while "The Rock's" has finally earned him the respect of WWF fans. Which one will get to the top first? ... When he was WWF champion, **STEVE AUSTIN** had all the leverage he needed in his war with **VINCE McMAHON**, but now Vince seems to have the upper hand. Think about it: How many viable options does "Stone-Cold" have outside the WWF? ... Find out why **PERRY SATURN** spurned both NWOs!

All this—and much more!—
in the February 1999 issue of
The Wrestler

NOW ON SALE!

WRESTLING SUPERSTARS



RIC FLAIR has always enjoyed a nice turkey dinner at Christmas. But this year he wants to enjoy carving that turkey more than ever. That's because he plans on carving up a turkey named **ERIC BISCHOFF** during this year's holiday season ... **PAUL BEARER** in an Austin 3:16 T-shirt? Could you just imagine *that*? Believe it or not, Bearer recently offered to help "Stone-Cold" bury **VINCE McMAHON**. We have details! ... How did your favorites do on their 1998 report cards? We graded 20 of them in five unusual categories!

All this—and much more!—
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Wrestling Superstars

NOW ON SALE!

On The Road

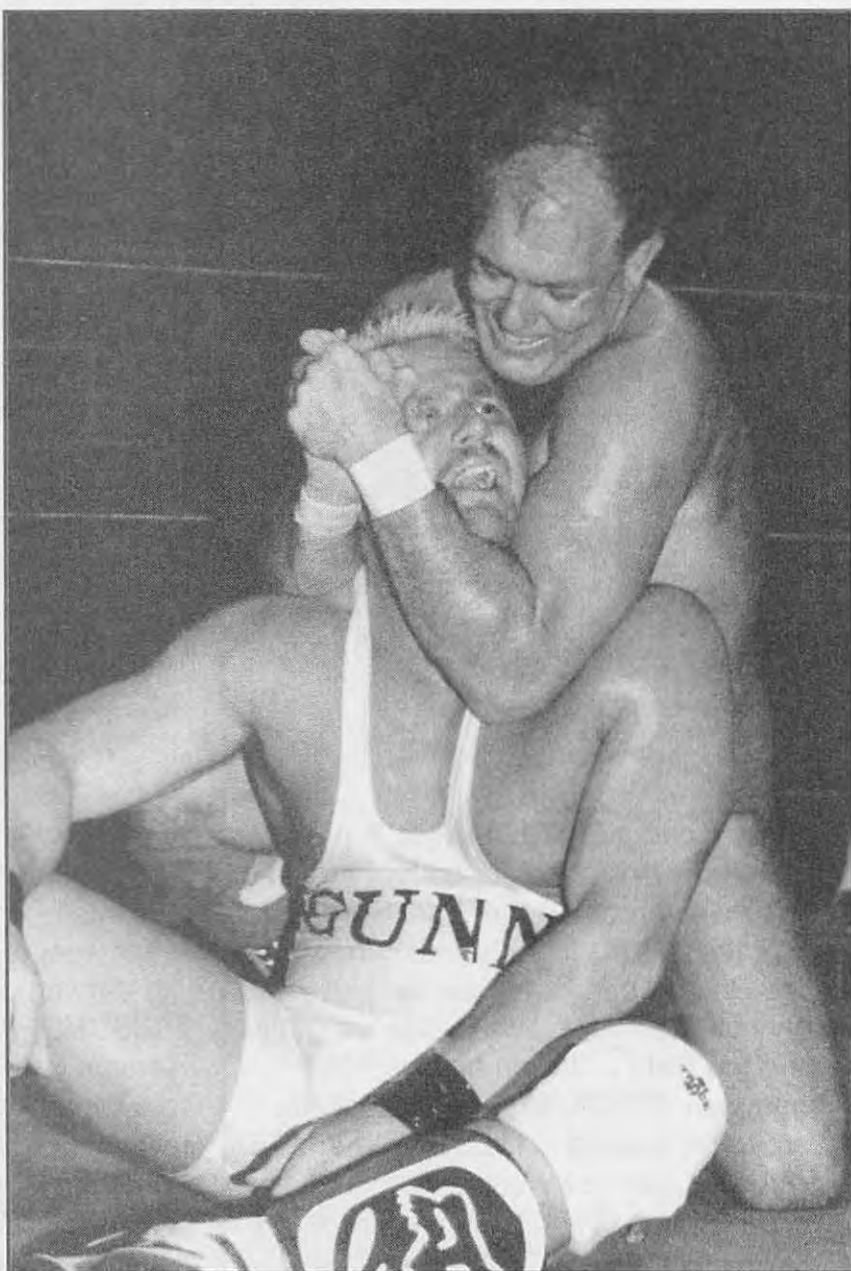
(Continued from page 10)

you do at 40 aren't the same things you did at 20, unless you're in an arrested state of development. Now, I guess some people might say that me getting together with Windham and Magnum shows that I have an arrested state of development, but that's an entirely different thing altogether. But it just seems that people are always demanding that the Horsemen get back together. Why? What's the big deal? The Horsemen were great in their time, but this isn't their time anymore."

As Blanchard spoke, workers were cleaning up after that night's card, which featured Blanchard and Tom Prichard losing a four-way match for the NWA tag belts. As Blanchard patiently answered questions, my mind kept wandering back to the Blanchard of five or 10 years ago, who was inconsolable after a loss. Today's Blanchard seemed serene, accepting. Had he learned how to accept defeat?

"You never learn how to lose," Blanchard said. "I'm angry. Right now, as I'm sitting here, I'm angry over losing. It's just that I show it in different ways. It's a waste of energy to break chairs, and it's dangerous to punch walls. I'll take my anger out the next time I step into the ring. Besides, at this point in my life, I've lost track of all the wins and losses. I'm not so obsessed with results anymore."

And there was my answer: In WCW, everything is results. NWO Hollywood and NWO Wolfpac go nuts over results. The Latino World Order cares only about results. The fans, the media, this magazine—all we care about is results. Blanchard wants to win as much as he used to, but he's not going to scream and yell. Call this the evolution of a quiet tough man.



Blanchard vs. Agent Gunn of The Border Patrol isn't likely to be a main event match on a WCW card anytime soon, but Blanchard isn't as interested in the goings-on in WCW as some people think. He likes wrestling in the NWA.

"I've talked to Flair a few times recently," Blanchard revealed. "He's dropped hints about me coming back. Of course, we know that for a while there, he wasn't even sure if he wanted to go back to WCW, so why should I want to deal with all that nonsense? I like

it in the NWA. The arenas aren't as big, the crowds aren't as big, the paychecks definitely aren't that big, but I'm doing fine. I'm not doing this for the money.

"I'm doing it for Tully Blanchard. Which means I can't do it for the Horsemen anymore." □

Behind The Door

(Continued from page 12)

I guess what I'm trying to say is that I'm tired of men in suits. The whole Mr. McMahon thing is getting old, but now it threatens to drag on forever, because Shane McMahon went over his father's head and reinstated Austin. Somewhere along the line, McMahon and Eric Bischoff decided that they could be the show. It's as if they always wanted to be the wrestlers, all wanted to be in the spotlight, but never could, so they found a way to buy into the spotlight. One thing you could always say about McMahon: He had the money, he dictated what went on in the WWF, and he had a big mouth, but he stayed out of the way. Not anymore.

I wonder if baseball fans would spend a dime to watch Bud Selig pitch to Mark McGwire.

Of course they wouldn't.

Slaughter's the biggest problem. He's supposed to be an unbiased commissioner, yet he referees matches and wrestles in others. He clearly has something against Austin. Once upon a time, nobody

knew who the WWF commissioner was. Not anymore. Now he's a big deal. The problem with that can be found in the words of any referee or official in baseball, basketball, hockey, or football. They often say that they did a good job if nobody noticed they were there.

When was the last time you failed to notice McMahon and his three stooges at a televised WWF card?

When was the last time somebody bought a T-shirt with the name Slaughter on the front? Or Patterson? Or Brisco?

Maybe I'm thinking about this because I'm writing it on the same day that 77-year-old John Glenn returned to space. Obviously, John Glenn was a man who didn't know when to retire. But at least he's doing something. He's an astronaut. His mission has a purpose. McMahon's three stooges can't say the same thing.

It must be terrible to go through life as a stooge. You'd think these guys would still have some pride. Then again, maybe they never had any. □



Not only are Sgt. Slaughter, Pat Patterson, and Gerald Brisco Vince McMahon's stooges, but they're proud of it. And just think—all three were once respected wrestlers. Well, respected by most people at least.

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The Insider

(Continued from page 14)



Goldberg, it's about time you stopped asking, "Who's next?" It's time for Jericho to ask that question, although he already knows the answer to it.

paper titleholder paid little attention to Jericho. So on the night of the frigid *Nitro* in Minneapolis, Jericho called out Goldberg (heretofore known by Jericho's mocking moniker of Greenberg) to come out and face him. Jericho got "Diamond" Dallas Page instead. Greenberg or DDP? Hmmmmmm ... what a choice. It is like choosing between yawning and falling asleep.

So Page calls Jericho out to a match instead of allowing his future foe to do battle. Good idea, brainiac. Wrestle a match six days before your dream championship

bout and let Greenberg rest.

But I digress again.

Match starts. Jericho dominates Page and wins by disqualification when Greenberg enters the fray and attacks our man Chris. You read that right, kids. Chris Jericho defeated the so-called number-one contender to the WCW World title. On that night, Jericho arrived, and the "Jerichoholics" rejoiced.

If you remember, when he entered WCW, Jericho was just another talented mid-carder. Every time he came to the ring, he had this annoying routine in which he'd fall back into the fans' arms. For

the most part, promoters ignored his talent, and fans began to mock his setbacks. So he lashed out, changed his attitude, and he has not looked back since.

He turned a cruiserweight title loss into a TV title victory within 48 hours. So not only was he smart (especially when it comes to WCW rules and regulations), crafty (when it comes to his ring victories), and talented (needing no explanation), but he showed he was resilient, too.

I caught up with Jericho at his hotel after the night's festivities. I congratulated him on his impres-

sive victory and asked him if he felt any different than he did 24 hours earlier.

"I'm the number-one contender now, right?" he asked. "It is now official. Trust me, I've already gone through the WCW rulebook with a fine-toothed comb, and it is very clear. I get a shot at the champion now."

I pointed out to Jericho that there were a few cheers for him and a smattering of boos for Page when they faced each other.

"Look, I can't control the 'Jerichoholism' that is gripping this country," he replied. "It's like an obsession. People must see me and be near me."

"When I came to WCW, the promoters acted like they couldn't care less about me. I proved myself by beating everyone they put in front of me. Page should just take this loss and deal with it. Who knows what I could have done if Greenberg hadn't interfered? Both of them know who's next. It's me."

As he said "me," Jericho pumped his fist and jumped in the air for everyone in the lobby to see. It was refreshing to see a man of his talent and success acting like a giddy schoolboy who had just been presented with a brand-new Partridge Family lunchbox. He had vanquished Page and taken away some of his perceived invincibility. Who's next for Jericho?

"Greenberg," he replied.

Like Joshua, Greenberg will fight the battle with Jericho, and those oh-so-mighty walls will come a-tumblin' down, down, down, down. But I digress again. Chris Jericho hasn't. He is on a straight road to the top of Mount WCW. And the "Jerichoholics" will rejoice when he gets there. □

On Assignment

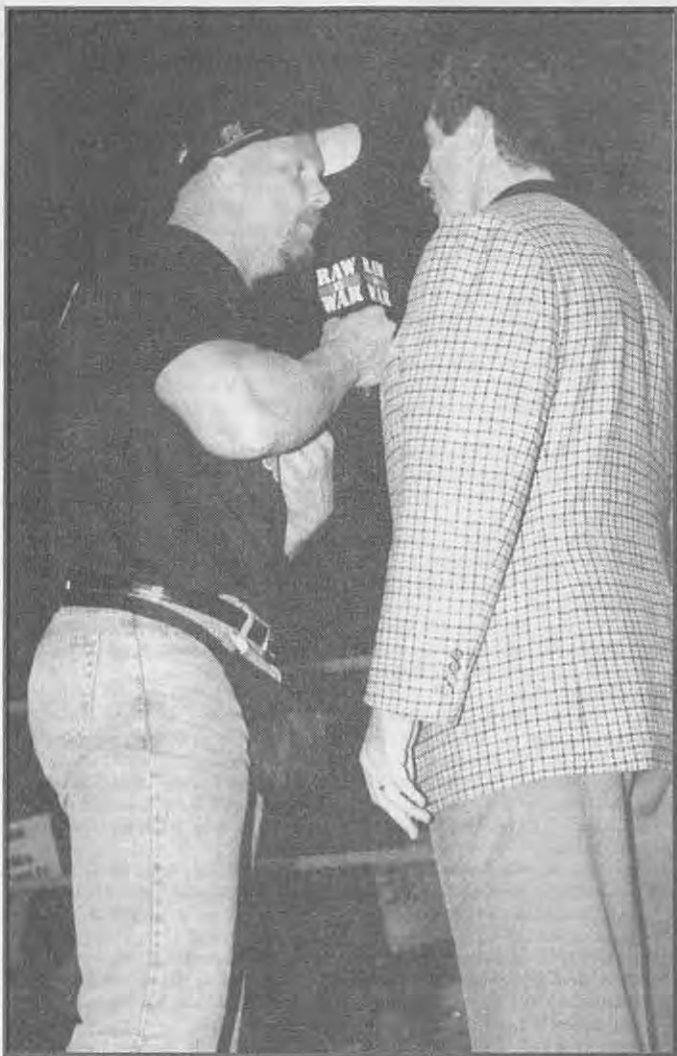
(Continued from page 16)

boss who has started to make important decisions hastily, based on (pardon the pun) raw emotion. Those close to McMahon say he never wanted to fire Austin, who has been just as much of a meal ticket as he has been an annoyance. However, when Austin declared himself WWF champion at Judgment Day (at the end of a match he officiated), Vince lost it and terminated the "Rattlesnake" on the spot.

Can you imagine what Vince Sr. and Grandpa Jess must be thinking right now? Here is their prodigy conducting himself like a schoolyard thug, picking fights and then hiding behind his stooges. He used to be a cheerleader of the federation, hyping bouts and superstars to anyone who would listen. Now he chooses to be sullen and withdrawn, lashing out at those who would do him wrong.

Has McMahon reached the point of no return? After all, what event or events could occur that would make Vince popular with WWF fans again? If he is not careful, his autocratic tactics will become his legacy. History will forget the bland, smiling owner and remember the bitter, pompous, and resentful WWF tyrant.

The man who built the WWF could be the man who tears it down. Granted, he's drawing great crowds at arena shows and impressive buy rates for



Nary an edition of *Raw Is War* goes by without Steve Austin confronting Vince McMahon (or vice versa) in some fashion. McMahon is to blame for all the chaos in his federation, says Liz Hunter.

pay-per-views, but at what expense? When will enough be enough? How long will fans and WWF wrestlers tolerate this insanity? They were without a champion for far too long. Why, you ask? Simple. Vince does not want "Stone-Cold" as champion, and the steps he has taken to ensure that he isn't champion have prevented others from holding the belt.

No champion. In fact, for a few days in October, there was no WWF World or Intercontinental

champion (McMahon stripped Hunter Hearst Helmsley of the I-C belt because he had a fairly serious knee injury). Theoretically, D-Lo Brown, the European champion at the time, was the "king." Vince's promotion could be a world of contenders with no viable champion.

Every action has an opposite and equal reaction, but Vince's actions have now cost him the relationship of his own son, Shane, who used his authority as a WWF executive to rehire "Stone-Cold" just 48 hours after he was fired. He berated his own father while Dad wept. But he won't be crying for long, for Shane did not just betray his father, he crossed the boss, and he best beware.

Vince guaranteed that at Survivor Series there would be a WWF World champ. Seems like I have heard his promises before. Keep in mind

that a new champion will not necessarily bring peace to the WWF. In fact, if Vince gets his way and one of his allies has the strap, the fans will lose out. They will not have a hero to worship, but rather a puppet on a string. And those strings will lead directly to Vince McMahon.

McMahon is no longer a real leader. He chooses to threaten and bully rather than rule with his head. As things stand now, only chaos rules in the WWF, and its face is Vince McMahon. □

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February 1987: Hogan, Piper, Orndorff: The WWF's Hate Triangle. Also: Terry Taylor, Ric Flair, Midnight Rockers, Kevin Van Erich.

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April 1987: Steamboat & Windham: Manny Happy Returns! Also: Paul Ellering, Hawkaw Duggan, prospects.

May 1987: Barry Windham's Warning To Lex Luger: "Keep Away From The Four Horsemen." Also: Steamboat-Savage, Hogan-Andre, Freebirds & Sunshine, Williams-ONG, Midnight Rockers.

July 1987: Exclusive Ringside Reports: WrestleMania III Makes History! Also: Midnight Rockers, Mike Rotundo, Danny Davis, Ted DiBiase.

September 1987: Hulk Hogan Defeats Harley Race: How Fate Took The Greatness Out Of This Violent Feud. Also: New Breed-R&R Express, Rich & Idol, Honky Tonk Man, Eddie Gilbert.

October 1987: The Rock 'n' Roll Express Win Their Fourth NWA Title: Also: Hogan-Bigelow, Rhodes-Blanchard, scaffold, Kevin Sullivan.

November 1987: Special Fan Poll: Should Mr. T Be Allowed To Referee? Also: War Games, Bulldogs, Condey & Rose, Dusty Rhodes.

December 1987: Rhodes Challenges Luger: Will Dusty's U.S. Title Hopes Split The Superpowers? Also: Hayes-Bubba, Magnum T.A.,

Randy Savage, Al Perez.

January 1988: Is Hulk Hogan Bored With The WWF Title? Also: R&R-Horsemen, Flair-R. Garvin, Adrian Adonis, Steve Williams.

February 1988: A Special Analysis By Jesse Ventura: Randy Savage Has Wimped Out! Also: Sting, R&R-Blanchard & Anderson, Kevin Van Erich, Dangerously-Lawler-Dundee.

March 1988: Bam Bam Bigelow: Wrestling's Most Dangerous Man. Also: Adams-Perez, Nikita Koloff, Honky Tonk, Freebirds.

May 1988: Million-Dollar Middleman: The Future Of The WWF Is In Ted DiBiase's Hands. Also: Zbyszko & Baby Doll, Road Warriors-Konga & Warlord, Fritz Von Erich, Rockers-Express.

June 1988: The Noble Savage: How Beauty Killed The Beast Within "The Macho Man." Also: Warriors-Warlord & Barbarian, R&R Express, Baby Doll, G. Gagne-Hennig.

August 1988: What Randy Savage Must Do To Escape The Shadow Of Hulk Hogan. Also: Hyatt-Gilbert, Sting, Michael Hayes, Honky Tonk.

October 1988: Preview & Analysis: Megapowers vs. Megabucks. Also: Horsemen, Jerry Lawler, Warlord & Barbarian, Dangerously-Gilbert, Beefcake-Honky Tonk.

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July 1989: Megapowers II? It's Time For Ultimate Warrior And Sting To Reunite! Also: Kerry Van Erich, Savage & Hart, Barry Windham, Demolition-Powers of Pain, ex-NWA stars.

August 1989: Your Ballots Are In: Hulkamania Rules! Also: Tanaka & Diamond, Rick Steamboat, Bigelow-Rhodes, Rick Rude, Jim Cornette.

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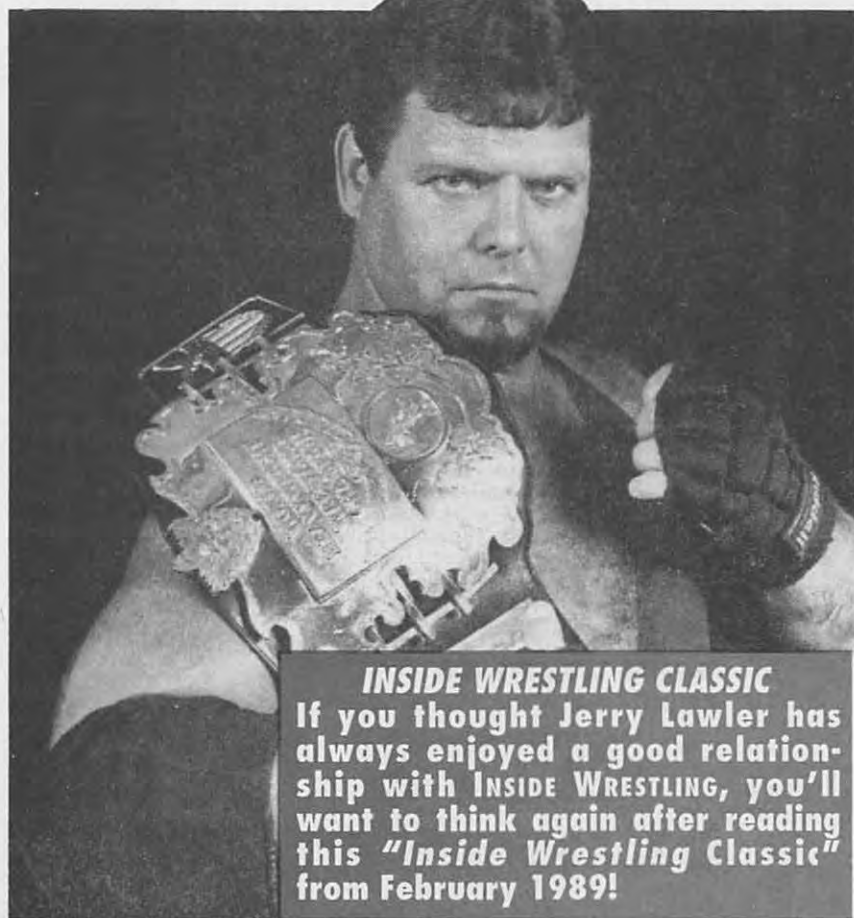
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Jerry Lawler's Warning To *Inside Wrestling*:

"IF RONNIE GARVIN WINS MY AWA TITLE—I'LL SUE YOU!"



INSIDE WRESTLING CLASSIC
If you thought Jerry Lawler has always enjoyed a good relationship with *INSIDE WRESTLING*, you'll want to think again after reading this "*Inside Wrestling Classic*" from February 1989!

CLAIMING THAT THE story you are now reading will cause him to lose the AWA World title, Jerry Lawler has threatened to sue *Inside Wrestling* for breaking a promise of journalistic restraint. Until the publication of these revealing photos, the details of Lawler's hand injury were unknown to fans and opponents, a deception Lawler had hoped to continue.

On a recent trip to Memphis, *Inside Wrestling* Senior Editor Bill Apter was let in on "The King's" secret.

"You're just in time, buddy," Lawler told Apter. "I was headed to the doctor's office. Bring your camera."

Apter tagged along, always relishing the opportunity to photograph a wrestler outside the ring. But when Apter took the photos on these pages, he never expected that they would be printed in an international publication.

Neither did Lawler.

"Bill," the AWA champion said during the medical examination, "I've known you for a long time, and the fact that I have to say this embarrasses me. But you have to make sure that these photos never get printed. You know that if any of my competitors found out the extent of my injury, it could have severe ramifications. I might even

When he injured his left hand in a recent softball game, Jerry Lawler didn't want anyone—especially his opponents—to know. A foe could capitalize on the injured hand and score an easy win. The extent of the injury has been Lawler's best-kept secret—until now!

lose the World title!"

"Come on, Jerry," Apter replied, "you know me better than that. We don't want to print these now. But if we ever print a career retrospective after you retire, we'll use these photos to show what a great competitor you were, that you could even wrestle with a broken hand. Don't worry."

Lawler trusted his old friend with the secret, relaxing as Apter's camera continued clicking.

Since injuring the hand while playing first base during a softball game at Memphis' Rodney Baber field, Lawler has had to rely on such promises of secrecy. The AWA World champion can't allow his opponents to find out that the power of his famed fistdrop might be largely neutralized by an injury.

In fact, in a match against Kerry Von Erich just one day after breaking his hand, Lawler opted to throw a sucker-punch before the match began rather than risk further injury. In later matches, Lawler has favored his left hand and even hidden the hand with the cast under a black glove.

After the examination, Apter said goodbye to his friend, sent the film to our offices, and continued his travels through the south. When Editor-in-Chief Stu Saks saw the photos two days later, he phoned Apter in Atlanta to congratulate him.

"Great job, Bill," Saks said. "You really came up with quite a scoop here. No one else will have these photos!"

"Wait a minute, Stu," Apter said, "we can't use those photos. I promised Lawler we wouldn't."

"What do you mean, you promised?" Saks howled. "You can't make a promise like that! This is journalism! We have a responsibility to our readers! The contents page of every issue says that *Inside Wrestling* is 'the magazine that rips the lid off pro wrestling,' and we have to live up to that!"

Apter, overruled by Saks, felt ob-



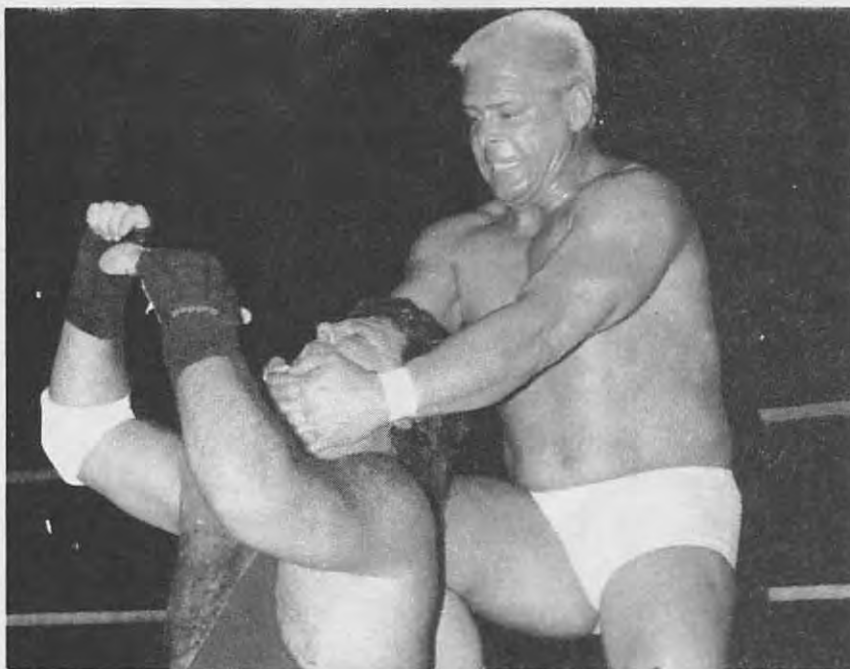
Jerry Lawler's doctor examines an X-ray of "The King's" injured left hand (above). The hand is set in a cast (below). Lawler is afraid his opponents will capitalize on the injury.



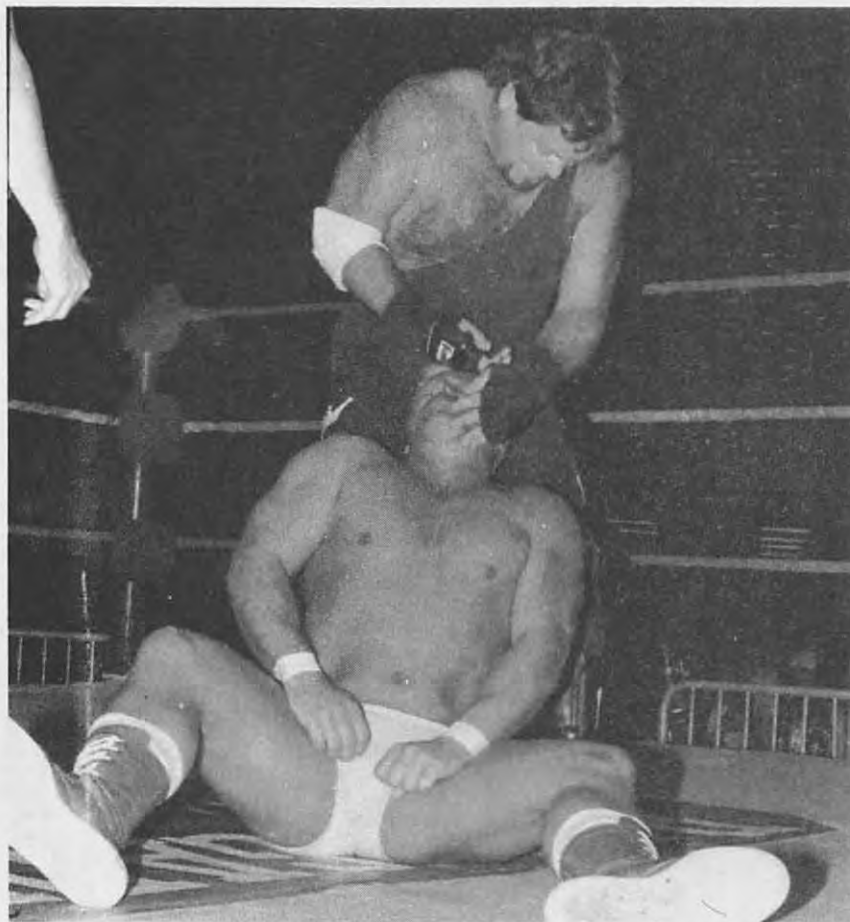
ligated to telephone Lawler to inform him of Saks' decision. Although Lawler received Apter's phone call with a king's kindness, his pleasure quickly turned to

anger.

"You lied to me, Bill! Do you realize that I might lose the title because of this? I've just signed for a series of matches with Ronnie



Ronnie Garvin chinlocks Lawler (above). "The King" chops Garvin in the head (below). Lawler has threatened to sue *Inside Wrestling* over publication of this story.



Garvin! That man relies on his fists, and if he knows that I can't rely on mine—! If Garvin wins my AWA title from me, I'll sue you!"

Lawler hung up on his friend,

but he had a point. If an opponent—especially one as crafty and experienced as Ronnie Garvin—learned of Lawler's injury, that opponent would have a marked ad-

vantage. He would be able to anticipate Lawler's every move. He would be able to prepare strategies of his own to exploit Lawler's weakness. Most of all, he would gain an all-important psychological edge over the champion.

Two days later, we received a letter from "The King's" lawyers reading, in part:

This is to advise you that, as counsel to Mr. Lawler, we are reserving the right to initiate legal action against your company should our client lose the means of his financial and personal successes, namely the AWA World title, as the result of your publication of medical information pertaining to Mr. Lawler's health. You have violated a verbal contract with Mr. Lawler and are legally at fault.

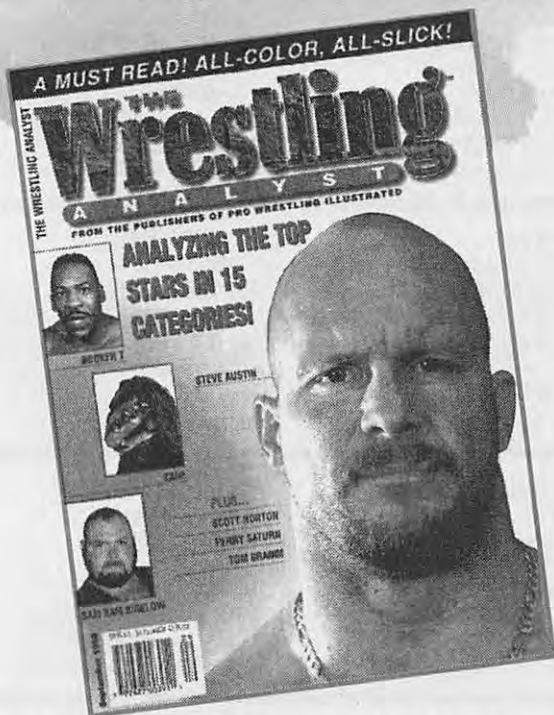
Concerned about the letter, Saks called our lawyers.

"Lawler's counsel is maintaining a sadly outdated position," our attorney told us. "Legal precedents in these cases demand—not merely allow, but *demand*—that these photos be published. The verbal agreement is not binding, of course, but the bigger issue is that the freedom of the press is unimpeachable. That freedom, secured in the landmark case *New York vs. Zenger* (1735), must be constantly maintained. If *Inside Wrestling* balks at publishing these photos, it will send a chilly message throughout the world of journalism, a message no publication can afford to send. Lawler has no case."

Despite the legal advice, Apter remained uncomfortable with Saks' decision to print the photos. "*Inside Wrestling* has a level of integrity to maintain, Bill," Saks said. "Lawler will understand. Besides, if he's such a great champion, he'll be able to win despite his injuries. He's done it before and he'll do it again."

Apter shook his head and walked away. He might have lost a friend, but Lawler stands to lose a lot more than that. □

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OFFICIAL RATINGS

TOP 15

1—STEVE AUSTIN

(1) No. 2 contender: WWF World title

2—BILL GOLDBERG

(2) WCW World champion

3—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(7) WCW U.S. champion

4—MITSU HARU MISAWA

(14) All-Japan Triple Crown champion

5—KEN SHAMROCK

(–) WWF Intercontinental champion

6—THE UNDERTAKER

(4) No. 3 contender: WWF World title

7—BRET HART

(3) No. 2 contender: WCW World title

8—MANKIND

(10) No. 4 contender: WWF World title

9—KANE

(6) No. 5 contender: WWF World title

10—ROCKY MAIVIA

(8) No. 6 contender: WWF World title

11—ROB VAN DAM

(11) ECW TV champion

12—BILLY KIDMAN

(–) WCW cruiserweight champion

13—X-PAC

(–) WWF European champion

14—SCOTT NORTON

(–) IWGP heavyweight champion

15—SABU

(–) No. 2 contender: ECW title

WCW

1—BILL GOLDBERG

(1) 270, Tulsa, OK

2—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(5) 260, Tampa, FL

3—BRET HART

(2) 235, Calgary, Alberta

4—STING

(4) 260, Venice Beach, CA

5—CHRIS JERICHO

(6) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia

6—HOLLYWOOD HOGAN

(3) 275, Venice Beach, CA

7—BILLY KIDMAN

(10) 195, Allentown, PA

8—PERRY SATURN

(12) 234, Boston, MA

9—THE WARRIOR

(–) 273, Scottsdale, AZ

10—THE GIANT

(–) 510, parts unknown

11—LEX LUGER

(9) 265, Chicago, IL

12—REY MISTERIO JR.

(–) 140, San Diego, CA

13—EDDY GUERRERO

(–) 221, El Paso, TX

14—KONNAN

(13) 237, Mexico City, Mexico

15—DEAN MALENKO

(11) 216, Tampa, FL

WWF

1—TITLE VACANT

2—KEN SHAMROCK

(10) 235, San Bernardino, CA

3—STEVE AUSTIN

(3) 252, Victoria, TX

4—THE UNDERTAKER

(4) 328, parts unknown

5—MANKIND

(7) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM

6—KANE

(5) 345, parts unknown

7—ROCKY MAIVIA

(6) 272, Miami, FL

8—X-PAC

(9) 212, Minneapolis, MN

9—CHRISTIAN CAGE

(–) 225, Toronto, Ontario

10—GOLDUST

(–) 254, Austin, TX

11—D-LO BROWN

(8) 305, Bronx, NY

12—JEFF JARRETT

(12) 230, Nashville, TN

13—MARK HENRY

(14) 413, Austin, TX

14—VAL VENIS

(13) 250, Las Vegas, NV

15—THE EDGE

(11) 240, Toronto, Ontario

ECW

1—SHANE DOUGLAS

(1) 240, Pittsburgh, PA

2—ROB VAN DAM

(2) 237, Battle Creek, MI

3—SABU

(3) 225, Bombay

4—TAZ

(5) 248, Red Hook, NY

5—SPIKE DUDLEY

(8) 155, parts unknown

6—TOMMY DREAMER

(4) 245, Yonkers, NY

7—MASATO TANAKA

(7) 235, Tokyo, Japan

8—CHRIS CANDIDO

(6) 226, Carteret, NJ

9—MAHONEY

(–) 361, Carteret, NJ

10—LANCE STORM

(13) 234, Calgary, Alberta

11—JERRY LYNN

(11) 214, Minneapolis, MN

12—BAM BAM BIGELOW

(9) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ

13—SUPER NOVA

(–) 215, Bricktown, NJ

14—NEW JACK

(14) 225, Philadelphia, PA

15—DANNY DORING

(–) 203, Pepper Pike, OH

INTERNATIONAL

1—MITSU HARU MISAWA

(3) 228, Ashikaga, Japan

2—RAYO DE JALISCO JR.

(2) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico

3—KENTA KOBASHI

(1) 261, Fukuchiyama, Japan

4—SCOTT NORTON

(4) 360, Minneapolis, MN

5—SHINYA HASHIMOTO

(5) 287, Gifu, Japan

6—APOLO DANTES

(–) 215, Guadalajara, Mexico

7—PERRO AGUAYO

(7) 220, Zacatecas, Mexico

8—AKIRA TAUKE

(8) 265, Chichibu, Japan

9—GREAT SASUKE

(–) 212, Morioka, Japan

10—EL HIJO DEL SANTO

(12) 180, Tulancingo, Mexico

11—ABISMO NEGRO

(11) 210, Pachuca, Mexico

12—JUSHIN LIGER

(13) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

13—PIRATA MORGAN

(9) 221, Mexico City, Mexico

14—FRANZ SCHUMANN

(10) 201, Graz, Austria

15—KENSUKE SASAKI

(–) 233, Tokyo, Japan

TOP 15 TAG TEAMS

1—BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES

(2) WWF World tag team champions

2—MASATO TANAKA & MAHONEY

(–) ECW tag team champions

3—TOSHIKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUKE

(4) All-Japan International tag team champions

4—SHIRO KOSHINAKA & GENICHIRO TENRYU

(5) IWGP tag team champions

5—KENNY KAOS & RICK STEINER

(–) WCW World tag team champions

6—D-LO BROWN & MARK HENRY

(–) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

7—BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY

(6) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title

8—SABU & ROB VAN DAM

(1) No. 2 contenders: ECW tag title

9—THE HEADBANGERS

(10) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

10—STEVEN DUNN & RENO RIGGINS

(9) NWA North American tag team champions

11—EIGHT-BALL & SKULL

(8) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

12—KNUCKLES NELSON & ERICH SBRACCIA

(–) NWA tag team champions

13—GOLGA & KURRAN

(–) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

14—BRIAN CHRISTOPHER & SCOTT TAYLOR

(12) No. 5 contenders: WWF World tag title

15—BORDER PATROL

(–) No. 1 contenders: NWA tag title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue ... Championships highlighted in bold on the "Roll Call Of Champions" have changed hands since our previous issue ... The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place.

For period ended November 4, 1998

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSU HARU MISAWA
(October 31, 1998; from Kenta Kobashi; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
TOSHI AKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 25, 1998; from Johnny Ace & Kenta Kobashi; Yokohama, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSU HARU MISAWA
(October 31, 1998; from Kenta Kobashi; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-PRO WRESTLING UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: BOOM BOOM COMINI
(October 17, 1998; from Maxx Justice; North Highlands, CA)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
ROBERT ROMA
(July 11, 1998; from Chainz; Stuart, VA)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
THE BAD STREET BOYZ
(October 24, 1998; from Brian Danzig & Daniel Mayes; Elkin, NC)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION U.S. CHAMPION: STEVE NILES
(August 29, 1998; from Easy Rider; Stuart, VA)

ECW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHANE DOUGLAS
(November 30, 1997; from Bam Bam Bigelow; Monaca, PA)

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: MASATO TANAKA & MAHONEY
(November 1, 1998; from Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley; New Orleans, LA)

ECW TELEVISION CHAMPION: ROB VAN DAM
(April 4, 1998; from Bam Bam Bigelow; Buffalo, NY)

INT'L PRO WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: TOM BRANDI
(June 13, 1998; from King Kong Bundy; Lebanon, PA)

IPWA HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: BUDDY LANDELL
(June 13, 1998; from Jimmy Cicero; Alexandria, VA)

IPWA LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JULIO SANCHEZ
(August 22, 1998; from Christian York; Chincoteague, VA)

IWGP HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SCOTT NORTON
(September 23, 1998; beat Yuji Nagata; Yokohama, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SHIRO KOSHINAKA & GENICHIRO TENRYU
(July 15, 1998; from Masahiro Chono & Hiroyoshi Tenzan; Sapporo, Japan)

IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JUSHIN LIGER
(February 7, 1998; from Shinjiro Otani; Sapporo, Japan)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DAN SEVERN
(February 24, 1995; from Chris Candido; Erlanger, KY)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: 911
(August 21, 1998; from Ace Darling; Fairless Hills, PA)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE NATIONAL CHAMPION: DOUG GILBERT
(October 24, 1998; from Stevie Richards; Cherry Hill, NJ)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION:
THE COLORADO KID
(August 1, 1998; from Recon; Nashville, TN)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE NORTH AMERICAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
STEVEN DUNN & RENO RIGGINS
(August 29, 1998; from Wolfie D & Flash Flanagan; Nashville, TN)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KNUCKLES NELSON & ERICH SBRACCIA
(October 24, 1998; from The Border Patrol; Cherry Hill, NJ)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE U.S. TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
THE PIT BULLS
(August 22, 1998; from Steve Corino & Lance Diamond; Mount Holly, NJ)

NWA NEW ENGLAND CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: TRE
(May 9, 1998; from Millennium; Somerville, MA)

NWA NEW ENGLAND HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CURTIS SLAMDAWG
(September 19, 1998; from Barry Windham; Everett, MA)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
MITSU HARU MISAWA
(October 31, 1998; from Kenta Kobashi; Tokyo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
YOSHINARI OGAWA
(July 19, 1998; beat Satoru Asako in tournament final; Niigata, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS:
TOSHI AKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 25, 1998; from Johnny Ace & Kenta Kobashi; Yokohama, Japan)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING AMERICAS CHAMPION:
RECKLESS YOUTH
(June 27, 1998; from Lance Diamond; Pottstown, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION:
CHRISTIAN CAGE
(October 10, 1998; from Julio Sanchez; Pottstown, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LANCE DIAMOND & RECKLESS YOUTH
(July 24, 1998; from Inferno Kid & Mike Quackenbush; Reading, PA)

WCW CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: BILLY KIDMAN
(September 14, 1998; from Juventud Guerrera; Greenville, SC)

WCW TELEVISION CHAMPION: CHRIS JERICHO
(August 10, 1998; beat Stevie Ray; Rapid City, SD)

WCW U.S. CHAMPION: DALLAS PAGE
(October 26, 1998; from Bret Hart; Phoenix, AZ)

WCW WORLD CHAMPION: BILL GOLDBERG
(July 6, 1998; from Hollywood Hogan; Atlanta, GA)

WCW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KENNY KAOS & RICK STEINER
(October 25, 1998; Rick Steiner beat The Giant & Scott Steiner; Las Vegas, NV)

WWF EUROPEAN CHAMPION: X-PAC
(October 18, 1998; from D-Lo Brown; Rosemont, IL)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: KEN SHAMROCK
(October 12, 1998; beat X-Pac in tournament final; Uniondale, NY)

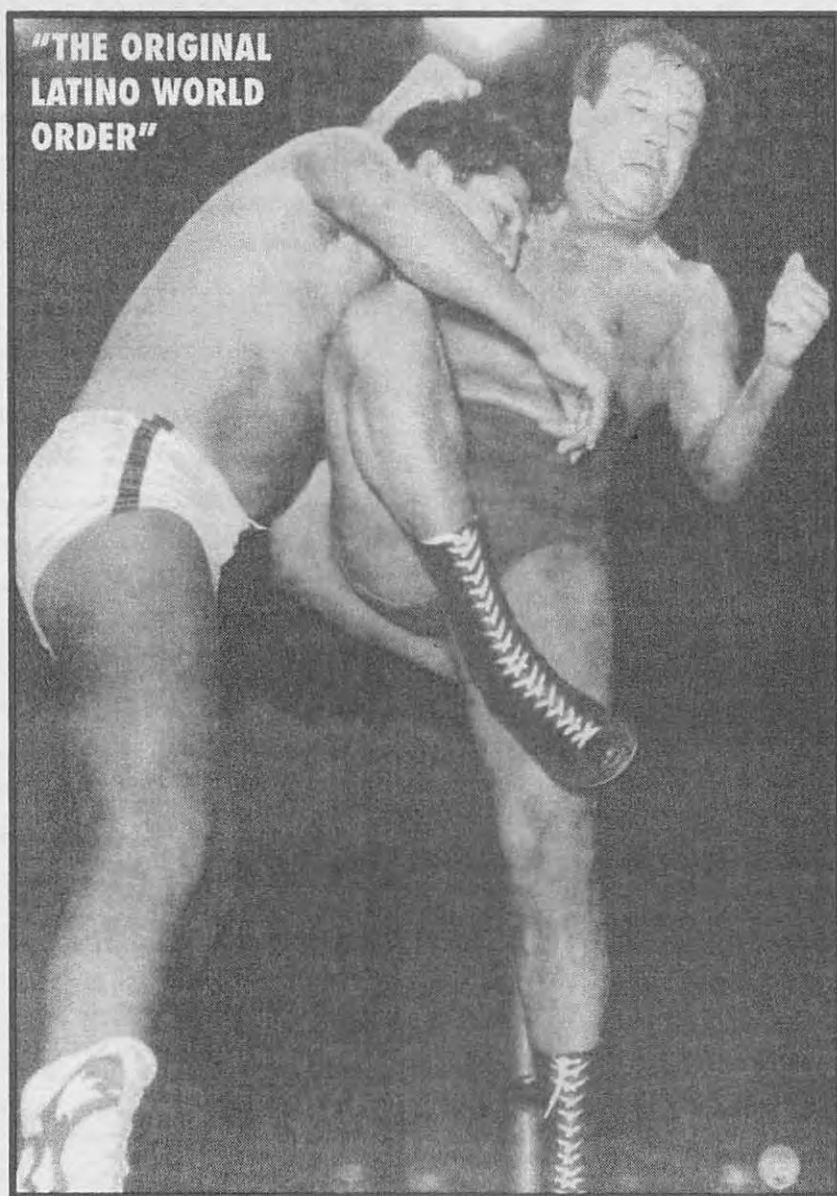
WWF LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CHRISTIAN CAGE
(October 18, 1998; from Taka Michinoku; Rosemont, IL)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: TITLE VACANT
(Most recently held by Steve Austin)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES
(August 30, 1998; beat Mankind; New York, NY)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

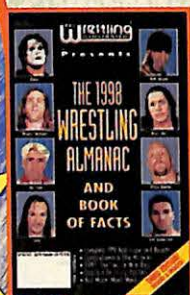
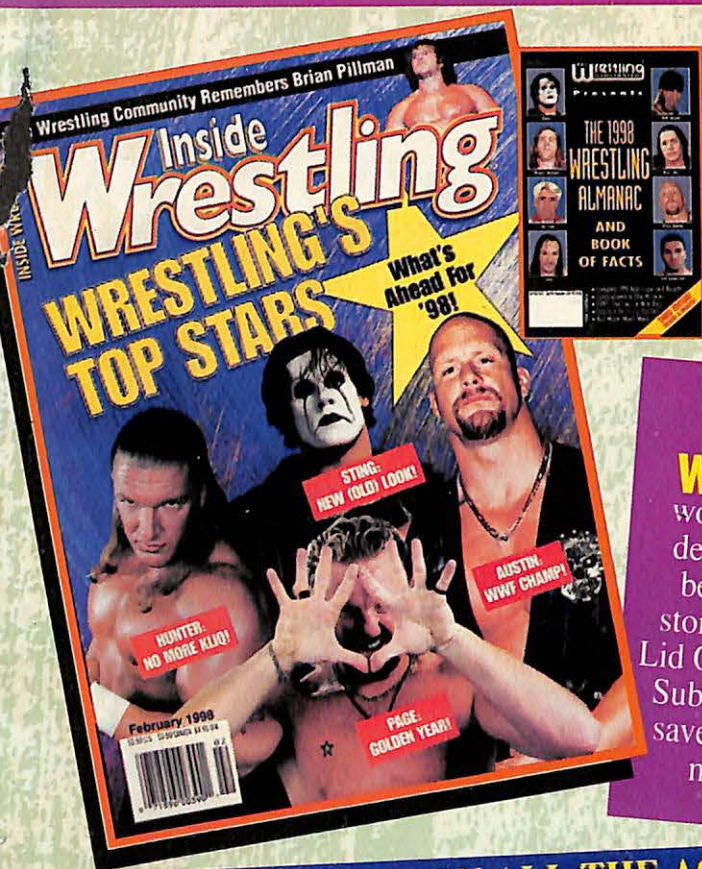
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RAY MENDOZA vs. GORY GUERRERO **February 1960**

Almost 40 years before Eddy Guerrero was trying to get some of WCW's Mexican stars to join the Latino World Order, his uncle Gory was battling fellow Luchadores like Ray Mendoza, who happens to be the father of Villanos IV and V. Is it any wonder Los Villanos have been reluctant to side with Eddy in his war against Eric Bischoff? Apparently, the feud between Los Villanos and the Guerreros runs pretty deep. Actually, though, most of the battles between Gory and Mendoza were tough, clean scientific bouts.

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